

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND ART

# *Horizon*

EDITED BY CYRIL CONNOLLY

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OCCUPATION OF JAPAN BY NOEL F. BUSCH

FREUD AND LITERATURE BY LIONEL TRILLING

LAW AND ORDER BY ROBERT LOWRY

EDUARDO PAOLOZZI BY ROBERT MELVILLE

FRANCIS PONGE AND THE CREATIVE METHOD BY BETTY MILLER

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# HORIZON

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Vol. XVI No. 92 September 1947

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
SCEPTRE-STRUCK, SPELLBOUND, BELOVED	George Barker 155
A CAMP IN THE PRUSSIAN FOREST	} Randall Jarrell 156
THE RISING SUN	
OCCUPATION OF JAPAN	Noel F. Busch 159
FREUD AND LITERATURE	Lionel Trilling 182
LAW AND ORDER	Robert Lowry 201
EDUARDO PAOLOZZI	Robert Melville 212
FRANCIS PONGE AND THE CREATIVE METHOD	Betty Miller 214
SELECTED NOTICE—ESSAY ON RIME	Waldemar Hansen 221

REPRODUCTIONS OF WORKS BY EDUARDO PAOLOZZI appear  
between pages 212 and 213.

The editorial and publishing Offices of HORIZON are at 2 Lansdowne Terrace,  
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Turn on your side and bear the day to me  
Beloved, sceptre-struck, immured  
In the glass wall of sleep. Slowly  
Uncloud the borealis of your eye  
And show your iceberg secrets, your midnight prizes  
To the green-eyed world and to me. Sins  
Coil upward into thin air when you awaken  
And again morning announces amnesty over  
The serpent-kingdomed bed. Your mother  
Watched with as dove an eye the unforgivable night  
Sigh backward into innocence when you  
Set a bright monument in her amorous sea.  
Look down, Undine, on the trident that struck  
Sons from the rocks of vanity. Turn in the world,  
Sceptre-struck, spellbound, beloved,  
Turn in the world and bear the day to me.

RANDALL JARRELL

A CAMP IN THE PRUSSIAN FOREST<sup>1</sup>

I walk beside the prisoners to the road.  
Load on puffed load,  
Their corpses, stacked like sodden wood,  
Lie barred or galled with blood

By the charred warehouse. No one comes today  
In the old way  
To knock the fillings from their teeth;  
The dark, coned, common wreath

Is plaited for their grave—a kind of grief.  
The living leaf  
Clings to the planted profitable  
Pine if it is able;

The boughs sigh, mile on green, calm, breathing mile,  
From this dead file  
The planners ruled for them. . . . One year  
They sent a million here:

Here men were drunk like water, burnt like wood.  
The fat of good  
And evil, the breast's star of hope  
Were rendered into soap.

I paint the star I sawed from yellow pine—  
And plant the sign  
In soil that does not yet refuse  
Its usual Jews

Their first asylum. But the white, dwarfed star—  
The dead white star—  
Hides nothing, pays for nothing; smoke  
Fouls it, a yellow joke,

<sup>1</sup> This poem first appeared in the *Nation*, New York.

The needles of the wreath are chalked with ash,  
 A filmy trash  
 Litters the black woods with the death  
 Of men; and one last breath

Curls from the monstrous chimney . . . I laugh aloud  
 Again and again;  
 The star laughs from its rotting shroud  
 Of flesh. O Star of men!

## THE RISING SUN

The card-house over the fault  
 Was spilt in a dream; your mother's terraces  
 Of hair fell home to hide  
 The wooden pillow, the sleek dazzled head  
 That bobbed there, a five-coloured cloud.  
 Above black pines, the last cloud-girdled peak  
 Was brushed on the starlight like a cone of rice.  
 The clear flame wavered in the brazier;  
 The floor, cold under the quilt,  
 Pressed its cramped ground into your dream.  
 The great carp, a kite, swam up to you  
 Along his line; but you were riding there,  
 A sun in air, the pure sky gazing down  
 From its six-cornered roof upon the world.  
 The kettle gave its hissing laugh, you bowed,  
 The characters of moonlight were your name  
 Across the bare, old order of the room,  
 And you awoke. In your rice-marshed, sea-margined plain  
 The flakes, like petals, blew from peak to peak;  
 The petals blew from peak to peak, like snow.

Dwarfed and potted cherry, warped  
 With the sea-wind, frost with moonlight: child,  
 The hunting ghosts throng here for love  
 Where water falls, a steady wish;  
 The *ronin* stalk by, girded with two swords—  
 These kill, these kill, and have not died;



You raise, as you have raised, the wooden sword—  
The great two-handed sword; and your fat breast  
Glow, trembling, in the patched  
And patchwork armour of your school.  
On this stage even a wall is silk  
And quakes according to a will; heads roll  
From the gutted, kneeling sons by rule.

So man is pressed into obedience  
Till even the eldest, unaccounting wish  
Of his bull's heart, is safe by rote  
From his tormentors—who are honourable  
In their way, which is your way, child.

The brushed ink of clerks, the abacus  
That tells another's fortune, life by life;  
The rice-ball garnished with a shred of flesh  
Or plum, or blossom, and thus named—  
Are these the commerce of the warrior  
Who bowed in blue, a child of four,  
To the fathers and their father, Strife?

But War delivers all things—men from men  
Into the hope of death: Deliverer,  
Who whirled the child's grey ashes from the West  
Into the shrine beside the rocks: O Way  
That led the twitching body to the flame,  
Bring to this temple of the blind, burnt dead  
The mourning who awaken from your dream  
Before a lacquered box, and take the last  
Dry puff of smoke, in memory  
Of this weak ghost.

---

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NOEL F. BUSCH

## OCCUPATION OF JAPAN

THE occupation of Japan was touched off by the most highly publicized explosion in history, in August of 1945; but while the world has since heard plenty about the atom bomb, it has heard comparatively little about Japan. In an era providing as much to worry about as the present one there are obvious reasons for this omission. Nonetheless, whatever has kept the subject, except for fragmentary or perfunctory mention, off the world's front pages, seems regrettable. For the occupation is not only important but also lively, strange and highly entertaining.

The basic factor in the strangeness of the occupation of Japan lies, naturally, in the character of the Japanese themselves. Since the Japanese character is explicable, in terms of history and environment, it can be argued that it is not intrinsically mysterious at all. Nonetheless, the manifestations of this character, to people who have had neither the obligation nor the opportunity to make such a study, are definitely surprising; and even more astounding than the Japanese impudence in starting the war, and their savagery in conducting it, have been their reactions following it.

To define the Japanese attitude toward defeat requires first of all, at least, a superficial understanding of that tedious cliché, 'face'. In itself there is nothing very mysterious about 'face'; it merely means self-esteem, or, more precisely, a confidence that the character which the world sees in one conforms more or less to the character that one wishes to display. However, where the oriental idea of self-esteem differs from the occidental is in the nature of the justification which the individual demands for this condition which is indispensable to both.

For most Europeans, for example, loss of the war to Japan might have resulted in a considerable loss of personal and individual face. For the Japanese, losing the war entailed no such loss. He was spared any sense of personal guilt on this score by the simple fact that the Emperor proclaimed the surrender. To the Japanese, one of the fundamentals upon which face depends consists exactly in obedience to this dignitary. Hence, the minute the surrender was announced, it became just as important

to the Japanese to obey the Emperor's command to co-operate with the Americans as it had previously been to kill as many of them as possible. If dying in large swarms in the streets of Tokyo would serve the purpose of preserving amity with the Americans, the Japanese would now no doubt be as fully prepared to do this as they were to die in large swarms on the Pacific Islands when the opposite result was desired.

Having been confronted by, and having accepted, the fact of defeat, the individual Japanese was faced with two alternative conclusions. One was to suppose that he had been defeated by a power weaker and inferior to himself. This was so painful as to be inadmissible (indeed some analysts of Japanese behaviour reported, even before World War II began, that the ill success of the China incident might make it necessary for the Japanese to fight America if only to avoid the ignominy of being beaten by the inferior Chinese). The other conclusion was to assume that he had been beaten by a power far stronger and superior to himself, indeed by the best in the world. Just as a man who has been knocked out in a bar-room fight might feel some consolation if he learned later that his opponent had been Joe Louis, this enabled the Japanese to avoid chagrin. It was the more appealing because it not only relieved him of blame but placed the blame squarely on the militarists who had made the mistake of not knowing what kind of scrap they were getting into. Consequently the Japanese adopted this attitude, and then proceeded to another hypothesis which is even more significant in explaining their present pattern of behaviour.

Trained for centuries to admire victory in war above all else, and convinced, both by the facts and their own interpretation of them, that the Americans were better at war than they were themselves, the Japanese saw a way to save further face by imitating their conqueror with the object, eventually, of becoming exactly like him. If by a process of imitating Americans the Japanese could eventually become more American than the Americans themselves, they would clearly not only have lost no face, but, assuming that the Americans were better than they were in the first place as the war had proved, they would have actually gained face. Just as the only way to have proved that the Americans were better was to have been beaten by them, so the only way to retrieve the situation was to be like the Americans. The only way



to do this was to welcome them and learn their ways, in the most wholehearted fashion.

Whether or not this attitude on the part of the Japanese represents a 'sincere' repentance for their share in causing the war, or a 'sincere' friendliness toward Americans now, it is difficult to say. Sincerity also defines itself differently for the oriental mind; and to an oriental any kind of sincerity that was not based on personal advantage of a basic sort would probably seem profoundly sentimental, as indeed it may be, although western Christian civilization prefers to believe otherwise. On the other hand the idea that the Japanese submissiveness in defeat represents some sort of conscious trickery on their part is as erroneous as the pre-war notion which it replaces, that they were a monkey race whom we could defeat overnight. Even the idea that they are genuinely submissive and repentant entirely misses the point.

In fact the Japanese are animated not by negative and reluctant acceptance of the occupation: their mood is one of aggressive and positive appropriation. They are behaving as though occupation by Americans had been their top war aim all along.

Furthermore, for the moment at least, they really feel this way. Since they want to copy Americans so much, the presence of models on hand for copying in the form of occupation troops amounts to a sort of everyday Christmas and makes the Japanese like the Americans even more for being so kind as to send them the models. It also convinces them that Americans must like them very much to take such pains to satisfy their desires.

Under these circumstances it is not astonishing that the Japanese are going about their latest venture in imitation with all the diligence which they once applied to less essential and preparatory ones. Imitation, as anyone knows who has ever seen a baby or been to school, is merely another name for learning. The Japanese are now demonstrating their capacity in this important branch of human activity as applied to politics and other basic enterprises with even more efficiency than that which previously enabled them to produce championship Olympic swimming teams ten years after they learned to swim the crawl and a grand scale heavy industry fifty years after they learned that locomotives were not dragons.

However, while it may be easy enough to report on the

Japanese mood of the moment, and even to analyse the Japanese reaction to the shock of defeat and the novelty of occupation, it is a little harder to foresee what effect this reaction will have later on, and how it will be altered after the peace has been signed and the occupation forces withdrawn.

Japanese response to the peace will not, like their response to the occupation, be a single one to a single dramatic stimulus. Rather it will be a whole series of responses to as yet non-existing and unpredictable stimuli. It involves, not one Japanese attitude toward one brief though bewildering environmental change, but many attitudes toward varying environments over a long period of time. In short, it involves Japanese character; and this is a subject which, unlike the Japanese mood of the moment, may require fairly extensive diagnosis.

★ ★ ★

If Japanese peculiarities were in some way integral and not the result of environment, then the Japanese would retain these differences in a new environment. As a matter of fact, however, the Japanese who emigrated to California, until the notion that they were a race of inferior character caused laws to be passed preventing this practice, did not only do so from the normal human impulse to better their condition in life. In addition, once they got to the U.S., they soon became indistinguishable except in appearance from other U.S. citizens. Indeed, even such salient Japanese physical peculiarities as small stature, bow legs and bad eyes tended to vanish as soon as Japanese immigrants got a balanced diet, stopped squatting on the floor, and learned to read English instead of picture-signs.

If it be assumed that the apparent peculiarities of the Japanese character are the result of specific environmental factors, the business of analysing the Japanese character becomes a question of determining what factors account for what traits. This may be difficult, owing to the basic philosophical uncertainty about human behaviour in general, and the complexities of the particular subject in hand. At least, however, it is in the realm of possibility and puts the subject of the Japanese character on the commonsense plane of cause and effect.

Since custom and costume are even verbally analogous, we may, as a starting point for an investigation of Japanese character, take the handy and obvious matter of Japanese clothes. At first

glance, a westerner finds it extremely strange that the Japanese should still go about in what looks like fancy dress, consisting of a kimono and a pair of sandals precariously held on the feet by straps shaped like a wishbone. On second glance it seems even stranger, for this adherence to oriental costume seems to conflict with the well-known powers of adaptation. Why, if the Japanese can copy extraordinarily complex western devices like clocks, electric lights and navies, cannot they copy a simple thing like a pair of trousers?

The superficial explanation for this adherence to traditional dress has been excellently stated by Lafcadio Hearn. The fact is that if the Japanese wore western clothes, they could no longer kneel or squat with either comfort or economy, since western clothes are not designed for such postures. If the Japanese could not kneel or squat they would need furniture in their houses. If they had furniture, they would have to have wooden floors, instead of light and soft straw mats. If they had furniture and wooden floors, the houses would have to be bigger and more heavily constructed. Hence, exchanging the kimono for trousers would involve an architectural revolution. In big cities where this revolution is gradually taking place, sartorial change is taking place also. However, architectural change is impeded by the fact that earthquakes, typhoons and volcanic eruptions are still dangers to be considered at all times and at most places in Japan. Light frame houses can be readily replaced, whereas strongly built western ones cannot be. Hence the Japanese are likely to go on wearing kimonos until someone alters the climate even more noticeably than one Japanese scientist already proposes to do by means of an atom machine in Guam to deflect typhoons.

The question of Japanese clothes is a relatively simple one so far. However it may be pursued a little further. Women's clothes in Japan, as in western countries, are more important than men's clothes. Authentically, the most noticeable item of women's clothes to the Japanese is less the kimono than the sash or *obi* which holds it in place and which, even more than the kimono, is altogether indigenous. The salient points about the *obi*, beyond the fact that it is the focal point of a Japanese woman's dress, and peculiar to that dress, are that it is made of heavy material; that it is tied in a knot; and that the kind of material and the kind of knot have great ritual importance. Now the *obi* and its characteristics



are true peculiarities of the Japanese; and hence if our assumptions about childhood patterns are correct, we should expect to find some dramatic reasons for the *obi* readily apparent in the early conditioning of Japanese children.

The most important fact about Japanese children is that they lead a luxurious life; and their chief luxury is being carried pick-a-back. The usual carrier is the mother; and she carries the child in a kind of sling in which the knot is important since if it came untied the child would fall on the floor. This form of pick-a-back ride is also a true Japanese peculiarity, since while Chinese children are also carried on their mothers' back they are rarely tied on; and while Indian papooses are tied on, they ride in baskets, facing backward.

For the fact that Japanese women wear *obis* and tie them at the back, various reasons have been advanced. One is that, because Geisha used to tie their *obi* in front, more conventional women chose to tie them at the back as a badge of respectability. This seems dubious on the face of it, since styles are universally set by women whom men find especially attractive, and Geisha occupy that role in Japan; and it seems doubly dubious since, were it the case, when Geisha began tying their *obi* at the back, as they have now done for several centuries, respectable women would doubtless have switched back again to a more convenient system. In fact it seems more plausible that, since Japanese children of both sexes are accustomed to pick-a-back rides, they form the habit of looking at this portion of a lady's anatomy with special interest, and never lose it. But before assuming that this may be the explanation of the *obi* let us see if it fits in with any further oddities of Japanese behaviour, which might tend to corroborate it.

One other Japanese oddity is that in the matter of physique as distinguished from dress the back of the neck is the focal point of a lady's beauty. Since all Japanese children spend a long portion of their formative years studying exactly this point in the anatomy of their caretakers it surely seems less than astonishing that they should become connoisseurs in it. And it is certainly hard to think of any better reason why this particular region, and no other, should be chosen by the Japanese people alone as a crucial point of feminine beauty. Indeed, the relation between childhood conditioning and its projection as an adult peculiarity is so striking in this case that it might by itself almost be enough to substantiate a rather startling generalization about aesthetics.

Certainly it is dramatic enough to encourage further investigation from the same point of view.

This inquiry could now be followed in any one of several different directions. One direction would be the cultural effects of methods of carrying infants, on a comparative basis, adducing evidence like the enthusiasm for weaving baskets among some Indians, or the affinity for fast, wheeled vehicles by grown-up occidentals who have been conditioned to the high-velocity perambulator and spent some of their happiest hours therein. Another would be the direction of Japanese romantic preferences and taboos, adducing such evidence as Japanese pornographs, of which an abnormal proportion show coitus being conducted from the rear, or Japanese conceptions of propriety, whereby it is considered less immodest for Japanese women to show their breasts than for them to show the insides of their mouths, which children inspect when getting premasticated food. It is equally possible, however, and may be more appropriate to extend it in a more exclusive way to the subject at hand, namely Japanese peculiarities in general. To this end, we may first inspect a few other Japanese childhood peculiarities and see whether they too, like the posture of the infant on its mother's back, produce obvious consequences in the life of Japanese adults.

Possibly the most striking fact about Japanese children is that there are so many of them. The Japanese have never learned to practice birth control. On the contrary, they prize many children as a possible means of insurance against old age, precisely because the children remain devoted and obedient to their parents. This point, however, we may hold in reserve and consider merely the effect on the children themselves of being so numerous. One consequence of this, combined with the Japanese housing arrangements, is that children learn to get along well, both with their parents and each other, by constant practice in their difficult enterprise. Not only are Japanese children likely to have large numbers of brothers and sisters, they are also likely to have large numbers of contemporary playmates, all of whom live in close proximity and are readily acceptable as being almost brothers and sisters. Japanese villages, even deep in the country, are so constructed that all the houses are close together and the main road serves as a sort of communal day nursery. The interdependence of children on each other, their fondness for each other,

and their lack of individual initiative or even identifying behaviouristic features is as noticeable as their numbers would lead one to expect.

Another impressive feature of Japanese upbringing is the way in which children are fed. Japanese children are not weaned until a comparatively late age, often not until the next child makes his appearance. Before weaning, also, they get more thoroughly fed than children elsewhere. Breast-feeding in Japan may be emphasized because such feeding is both an economical and emotionally satisfactory method. In any case, by the time a Japanese baby is weaned he is sick of milk and hence not jealous of his successor; and long before this he is disgusted with food in general. The idea that food is scarce and hard to acquire, which western infants who are fed at stated intervals naturally derive from their conditioning, never dawns on a Japanese baby. Instead, he learns to regard food as merely a rather tedious accompaniment to the agreeable experience of being carried about and otherwise made much of. When he does get food, it is just like everyone else's: rice and raw fish, washed down by a thin soup. No one makes much fuss about food in Japan, and delicacies more elaborate than simple bean-paste are extremely rare.

Where education is concerned, the Japanese child also gets special treatment, compared with children elsewhere. For one thing his education starts early and consists of intensive house-training by his parents at an age when western children are still damp and troublesome; for another, the education is uniform, since almost all Japanese have the same living standard and are bound by the same conditions and conventions. Thus, although Japanese children may dislike school they do not dislike it as much as children elsewhere, despite the fact that their lessons are much harder. The first thing a Japanese school child encounters is an endless collection of complicated symbols which are moreover to be used in spelling words of which the complexity is such that he could never learn all of them if he studied nothing else for the rest of his life. Far from being discouraged by this prospect, Japanese children learn to read much more quickly than western ones and complete illiteracy is totally unknown.

Consideration of various aspects of childhood in Japan could be prolonged, but these three aspects may serve as a triangular base on which to try out the hypothesis that Japanese peculiarities



are derived from the peculiarities of their childhood. If this hypothesis holds water, we should find readily discernible in Japanese adult behaviour some idiosyncrasies in which these conditions of childhood are projected, and which could scarcely be explained in any other way.

Among Japanese adults easily the most obvious outward trait is politeness and consideration for each other. Far from snapping and snarling, like Americans or many Europeans, Japanese treat each other with delicacy and restraint. They are readily responsive to authority; but Japanese on a plane of equality seem to have none of that rivalry, that desire to lead and to avoid being led or pushed, which, by comparison, characterizes western conduct. Japanese waitresses, when not occupied with serving, chatter and giggle happily together: when occupied in serving, they do it with unending outward good humour, towards each other as well as their patrons. Japanese workmen co-operate happily and smoothly, and enjoy working together. Communal farming, indicated perhaps by the economic and topographical character of the country, is conducted as though it were dictated by the topography of human nature. The whole social structure of Japanese life has an ease and friendliness remote from that of western civilization, and especially remote from civilization in the U.S. The only thing that comes close to it is the social structure of Japanese families, with their swarms of children, squealing and scrambling and happily hoisting each other about in the gutters of 50,000 Japanese villages.

The theory might be advanced that Japanese adults must get along well together because so many of them have to live together in a small country of such limited resources. However, this purely pragmatic explanation—while it may well be a contributory or complementary cause, in so far as the sociability of the Japanese does indeed suit their way of life, and is thus encouraged thereby—will scarcely serve as a basic cause. For example, when such pragmatic reasoning is applied to the matter of food, it would prompt the conclusion that, in a country where 70,000,000 people must live on the produce of 15,000,000 arable acres with a few almost negligible imports, food would be highly prized and a subject of general interest. The reverse of this is the case. The Japanese attitude toward food is remarkable because it is at the opposite emotional extreme. Not only do the Japanese really take

very little interest in food for its own sake, but they also take an intense and essentially frivolous interest in it for the sake of its appearance. At a Japanese banquet not the food, but the way it is arranged on the plate, is of chief interest; and even this is subsidiary to the interest in the placing of the table, the appearance of the room, and the entertainment. At the opposite end of the social scale, occidental investigators are amazed at how little sustenance a Japanese family seems to need, or on what light rations Japanese soldiers were able to campaign in the field without appreciable discontent.

The Japanese attitude toward food would indeed seem applicable only in a country where the people were so sure of plenty to eat that the fear of not having enough had never occurred to them. But in fact, while the Japanese seem to fear starvation less than almost anyone else, they actually have reason to fear it more. It would be an agreeable compliment to human will-power to suppose that this is a purely functional reaction but it seems more likely that again it is rather the consequence of the early conditioning in which they are specifically glutted with food, and simultaneously given a feeling of security by parental attention and serenity in their social background.

Most commentators on the Japanese are impressed, agreeably or otherwise, by the Japanese flair for imitation. In a nation which has jumped from medieval civilization, however highly developed, to modern industrialism in less than a century, examples of this trait are too obvious to enumerate; the whole accomplishment is sufficient testimony in itself. However, the question of why the Japanese have this trait of imitation more than any other people remains to be answered. That the trait is useful will scarcely serve as an explanation. If mere usefulness were enough, then the Philippines and the Chinese would have caught up with industrialism also, but they have failed dismally to do so. Nor will the fact that the Japanese long ago imitated the Chinese by copying their language serve to explain their later rapid assimilation of European culture.

In the Japanese flair for imitation we have a case in which the childhood attitude is, metaphorically speaking, projected not statically, as in the case of social adjustment and the attitude towards food, but rather kinetically, like the projection of an image on a motion-picture screen. The Japanese attitude toward education is already

conditioned by the time Japanese children start going to school; school reinforces it, and it continues to increase and develop throughout adult life, becoming intensified all the more because it is eminently advantageous. Imitation of course is merely learning in its most acute form, and the Japanese inability to create or originate, which has been observed as a trait complementary to their capacity for copying, now appears in its proper perspective, as part of the young student's habitual readiness to absorb knowledge without trying to extend or improve on it. Just as school presents itself to the Japanese child as a continuation of his agreeable infancy, so learning in later life is attractive as an echo or extension of his happy childhood. All the influences in this childhood, such as favourable response to an agreeable parental authority, predispose him to acquire knowledge rapidly and painlessly; and this he does, to a degree not approached by the representative of any other race.

One might wonder why, this being the case, the Japanese kept themselves bottled up for so many centuries instead of going in search of models to copy. The answer here is obviously complicated by geographical and historical, as well as behaviouristic, causes. But one might hazard the guess that just as the Japanese are responsive to anyone who stands in the role of a friendly authority or teacher—a category which of course includes General MacArthur—they are equally and correspondingly opposed to a hostile authority which cannot be cast in such a role. Such authority indeed seems foreign to their experience and as such unassimilable and to be hastily discarded. The Japanese welcomed St. Francis Xavier as a teacher in the fifteenth century; but when the Christians threatened the unity of the country, and when their philosophy became a political force rather than a subject to be learned, the Japanese resented and attempted to eject it.

So far we have examined three aspects of childhood conditioning in Japan and tried to see how they are projected into adult life. It remains to be seen whether other peculiarities of Japanese behaviour selected at random can plausibly, and even reasonably, be derived from childhood training. And it also remains to be seen what it all proves, beyond the fact that the Jesuits and the modern psychologists are correct in their views of human conduct.

So far, undeniably, and permissibly for the sake of the argument, we have inspected only the ways in which the outstanding



characteristics of childhood training are manifested in adult behaviour. Hence for the next step we should select rather the most complex and mystifying Japanese idiosyncrasies and see whether conversely they can be regarded as extensions of childish or infantile idiosyncrasies. If we take Japanese religion as Exhibit A of a national characteristic, though it may well be urged later that our explanations are inadequate, no one can suggest that we have tried to cheat by taking an easy example.

Nothing could be more Japanese than the Japanese religion, which is a strange *mélange* of Buddhism, Shintoism, and Confucianism, and by the same token nothing could be more complex. Even the fact that it is not altogether Japanese but partly borrowed from China, or even via China from India, in itself makes it especially Japanese, as the supreme example of the Japanese readiness to copy anything. But here we must remind ourselves, lest we be tempted to irrelevant extensions of a line of thought already drawn upon sufficiently for our purpose, that even the simplest human action has a multiplicity of causes. It is not in our interest to list all of these but merely to select the most basic, or revealing. Of course Japanese religion is conducted in shrines whose architecture could be related to the architecture of houses in a significant way, and of course the raiment of the gods and goddesses, the size of the statues of Buddha and so on could be used as material for another *Golden Bough*. But what interests us here is merely to see whether some essential distinguishing feature of Japanese religion is a reflection of some feature of the early life of the emotion from which religion naturally springs.

Viewed in this way, it is at once clear that the very complexity of the problem is exactly what makes it easy to solve. The essence of Japanese religion is precisely that it does not contain one God, in the sense that the western religions do, but rather Gods in every shrine and element. Such Gods are more like the 'destiny' of the Greek or Roman myth than the Holy Trinity. The Japanese attitude toward them resembles more the occidental attitude toward those 'childish' superstitions which he propitiates by not walking under ladders or refraining from sitting down thirteen at table than it does the western attitude toward God the Father.

In a psychological as well as philological sense, the phrase God the Father contains the key to the situation. The Japanese Buddha is of course the senior partner in the Japanese theistic *Zaibatsu*, but

he is not conceived in a paternal sense; there is no father God. It would be too easy to say that the Japanese need no father God because the real father of the family serves this purpose so well that a substitute is not required. It would be an over-simplification also to suggest that the easy relations between contemporaries make a similar sort of semi-fraternal association with divinities acceptable to the Japanese. But both these statements contain aspects of the truth. Other fragments may lie in the lack of repressed infantile fear which we have detected in the Japanese attitude toward food and toward his fellow man; in the lack of sexual repression that goes with close contact between the sexes from earliest childhood, and intimate one-room association with the parents; and even in the satisfactory adjustment to the world on a purely practical basis, which all these enhance and encourage.

To the western mind, the difference between the divine and the non-divine, i.e. between repressed infantile fears and conscious rationalization, is so profound that it is difficult to conceive of a link between them, with the result that theologians spend years discussing such potential links as the Virgin birth or whether Adam and Eve had navels. To the Japanese mind, since even the Gods are not really divine, it is easy enough to consider humans as Gods; hence the 'divinity' of the Emperor, whose status we may take as Exhibit B on the list of Japanese peculiarities to be related to the behaviour pattern of childhood.

The occidental idea that the Japanese consider the Emperor divine is basically an error of translation, consequent on the initial error of supposing that the Japanese consider the Gods divine. In fact, the Emperor is not even a link between God and man since no such link is needed. His 'divinity' is merely that which in America for example is accorded to heroes like Lindbergh, at the peak of his fame, George Washington, or the Supreme Court, with the difference that in Japan such divinity happens to be the highest kind that exists. Once we know how little divinity is really ascribed to him, it becomes easier to perceive how little effort it cost the Japanese, after their defeat in World War II, to deprive their Emperor of it, and how little his prestige was lessened thereby. The Japanese never worshipped the Emperor; but they revere him now as much as, if not more than, they did before the war.

This reverence is, of course, like that accorded the King of

England by his subjects, Stalin by his, and the President of the U.S. by the U.S. citizens, merely a variation of the reverence which children give their fathers. That in Japan it is so especially universal and so profound is again rooted in the happy relationship between Japanese children and their fathers. The sharp tensions common in European families have never existed in Japan; violent rebellion against the father never occurs, which may help to explain the lasting obedience of adult sons and its counterpart, the readiness of full-grown soldiers to die heroically for the projection of the father during wartime. Here, too, the habit of associating with swarms of small contemporaries prepares the Japanese for his adult role as one of a swarm under a 'divine' father. The role is a familiar one and comfortable in that it reproduces a period when the individual's comfort was even more complete.

Next to the Emperor and his government, the most important institution in pre-war Japan was the Zaibatsu. The Zaibatsu have now ostensibly been done away with but we may still take them as Exhibit C on our list, because, whatever their successor may be, they were peculiarly and exclusively Japanese in character. Here research is simplified by the fact that the very name Zaibatsu means 'family corporation'; and it is used in a double sense because not only were the corporations run for centuries by their founding families but they were organized along the lines of the Japanese families which originated them.

Of course most other human organizations, including U.S. corporations, are also patterned on the family; there is in fact no other model that they could be patterned on. But what used to amaze westerners about the structure of the Zaibatsu turns out to be, on close investigation, the precision of its resemblance to the Japanese family pattern, a precision which enhanced the mystification since the nature of the family was in itself unknown. In U.S. corporations, the jealousies and rivalries normal to U.S. children are reproduced and reflected in the office. Corporations themselves and the relations between them are governed by elaborate contracts and legal definitions. In the Japanese Zaibatsu such rivalries were minimized; the relations between the heads and the employees and among members of both groups were governed by convention rather than by law. Acceptance of the agreeable family pattern was tacit because the pattern in Japanese life is both universal and agreeable.



In the Zaibatsu, personal loyalties, rather than contracts, sustained the interlocking directorates. A word from someone's grandfather stood in lieu of a bond; and an acknowledged paternal *noblesse oblige* often made labour unions unwelcome even to Labour. That in America different results would derive from such paternalism is beside the point.

At this stage, it may be as well to see where our investigation is going because despite the use of the first person plural it is not the reader's investigation but strictly the author's. The reader has a right to feel critical; and by now he may experience important doubts on at least two grounds. In the first place he may, despite efforts to the contrary, find all this evidence unconvincing and feel that while perhaps there is some truth in it, much of the argument is too far-fetched or over-simplified. Secondly he may feel that even if it were all convincing, it would prove very little.

These are fair objections. Indeed, while our arguments may seem to the general reader both debatable and over-simplified, specialized readers might feel even more, rather than less, dubious about them. Students of the Japanese could doubtless point to flaws in the evidence. Students who accept the psychological principle involved could most probably detect flaws in its application. Readers who qualify on both counts, if there be any such, would be likely to find fault on both scores. However, at this point it may be as well to admit that so far the whole trend of the investigation has been a little disingenuous. What the author really had in mind was not so much to gain specific credence for the specific points at issue; better qualified psychologists and anthropologists should attend to this chore and can handle it more extensively. Nor was it the author's intention to prove an already widely accepted principle by bringing in a few new bits of testimony. The underlying purpose was simply to show that, if it be admitted that childhood conditioning universally controls human conduct, it should also be admitted that this control is apparent more completely in Japan than elsewhere.

Other races and people, to be sure, project their infantile attitudes into adult life just as inevitably as do the Japanese; but the relation between the image and the projection is less readily discernible. The trick is done with so many mirrors that, to students of behaviour who are not technicians or specialists, it may create the illusion that this relationship is non-existent. And technicians

who do not know how the trick is worked are almost forced to believe that the very purpose of adult behaviour is to conceal its childish origin from prying investigators.

In Japan, on the contrary, one does not have to be a behaviourist to see the process at work; nor need we suppose that the connections are apparent to us only because they are themselves as foreign to us as the modes of behaviour to which they relate. If we remember that human beings naturally cling to, or retrogress towards, those periods of their lives which were most agreeable to them, and that in Japan more than elsewhere, infancy is such a period, it seems natural enough that the connection between their behaviour as adults and their behaviour as children should be especially noticeable. And if we now glance once more at the whole horizon of Japanese life, or the whole perspective of Japanese history, we will find, as might be expected, that both are coloured by the special glow, and drawn in the fine and crafty lines of this special yearning for the remotest past.

With this deep subconscious impulse as a clue, much that seems strange in Japanese behaviour becomes easily explicable. The sudden changes of mood of the Japanese; their quickness and dexterity; their docility when confronted by authority, and their lack of self-discipline when exempted from it; their stoicism, acceptance of the world and its conditions as conceived by them: these are the flexibility, the obedience, the unruliness, and the stoicism of adults who possess and cling to, in a way unimaginable to occidentals, the emotional status of childhood.

The use of the word 'childish' is of course misleading—though it seems better to use a simple word for a condition for which even the ponderous lexicon of the psychologists has not as yet provided a term. But it would be dangerous to use the word without full consciousness of its specific limitations. Especially it must be born in mind that the kind of childishness under discussion also assures a kind of super-subtlety, directly opposed to the connotations of 'childish' and with the obverse associations. The Japanese live as long as westerners and if their emotional life is, in a way, kept at a childish level, other aspects of life, and even emotional life, in another way, will be correspondingly rarified and refined to a degree inconceivable to westerners, whose scope is larger and less repressed.

All Japanese art illustrates this point, which eludes abstract

definition. The essential qualities of a Japanese poem are its simplicity in theme, its diminutive size, its toylike fragility of mood. But precisely these limitations call for and ensure a subtlety of expression, a delicacy of implication which are the converse of childish, and remain actually imperceptible to westerners, like the sound, inaudible to man, that startles a deer in the forest. The simplicity of Japanese painting and architecture are perhaps childish but they guarantee again a refinement both of technique and response that, in western aesthetics, has never even been approached. Japanese music is so delicate that the gradations between notes are on a sort of miniature scale but this does not impair its melody for Japanese ears, nor does the mournful simplicity of a Geisha song, which sounds like, and is derived from, cradle music, diminish its deep sophistication.

In Japanese history, it is not hard to find an example of this same retrogression. Indeed, the history of Japan could be said to be composed of nothing else. While the rest of the races marched westward, the Japanese turned east, towards the rising, not the setting sun, backwards instead of forwards. When, having emigrated from China, they were pocketed in their little islands, they stayed there happily and did their best to prevent rude incursions from outside. Unlike the volatile English whose insular confinement caused them to explode all over the globe, the Japanese preferred to nurse that tiny retrogressive wonderland, brooding for secret centuries over the cocoons of minute caterpillars, and growing in their walled tiny gardens trees that grew smaller with the generations.

Where the Japanese acquired their unique reaction to the individual and collective past, and whether it is mostly the cause or the result of their environment, are matters which do not concern us here. What does concern us—since Americans now propose to alter the race superficially or otherwise—is how to do so. Clearly, no true alteration of the Japanese can occur except with an alteration in the way that Japanese children are brought up—starting not in school but in the cradle. Equally clearly, since children are brought up by their parents, this alteration must start with grown-ups. The occupation will of course alter the latter. As to the former, the results will take at least a generation. Even then, it seems safe to predict, the Japanese will go on being Japanese.



It is easy enough to dramatize the occupation in superficial terms of East meeting West, and the old conflicting with the new. In fact, however, what gives the situation its real drama and its enormous importance goes much deeper. The origins of what is now happening in Japan are drawn quite directly from the deepest wells of human history, and its outcome may quite possibly—in Hitler's phrase, which proved so inappropriate to the occupation of France—determine the history of the next thousand years, or even a few more than that.

Human life started on the globe, so far as can be ascertained, somewhere in Asia Minor and spread outward from there, in two directions, East and West. It may be far-fetched to suppose that some fundamental difference in attitude toward the past and the future, some intuitive difference in reactions to the fundamental facts of night and day, as well as the mere circumstances of primitive economy, determined which peoples turned East and which turned West. But it is surely not far-fetched to suppose that, having chosen different ways, the different peoples were differently conditioned by them. If only this much be acknowledged, then it follows that the Japanese are the end product of the eastern-moving branch of human culture, and constitute the epitome of the traits that produced or were produced by it, and that likewise, the Americans are the epitome of the traits which produced, or were produced by, the branch that started and continued toward the West.

We have seen how, individually, the Japanese are retrogressive toward their childhood. It may be that this characteristic is best exhibited racially by Japanese architecture, of which the peculiarly curved roof may be an attempt to reproduce the line of the tents in which the Japanese lived during the nomadic period that preceded this settling down on the ultimate eastern islands. Skyscrapers, on the contrary, are nothing if not a new departure in the world's architecture, and the essence of western culture generally, and of American culture especially, is precisely symbolized thereby. Western culture differs from Eastern culture most fundamentally in that while the latter cherishes yesterday, the former prizes tomorrow; indeed it was the search for new things, made in the track of the sunset, that caused Europeans to get to America in the first place, and then caused Americans to get to the coast of California. Once the westerners got that far,

the two main branches of civilization were separated only by the world's greatest geographical barrier, in the form of the Pacific Ocean, and in view of the nature of the western branch, it was of course a safe bet that this barrier would eventually be crossed.

But what the crossing means is something else again. Unlike that of the Atlantic, which in effect merely gave Europeans a spare room to play about in for a few generations, the crossing of the Pacific by the most essentially western representative of western culture, and the imposition of this culture by force upon what is by definition the most oriental nation in the Orient, is a milestone quite unprecedented in the history of the globe. It raises for the future the question of whether European culture, which has never seeped backwards into Asia, can be brought to it in a direction clockwise from some observer on the North Pole. And it offers, for the present, the spectacle of an occupation of what is, in this sense, the oldest nation in the world by what is, in the same sense, the newest.

The contrast between the two civilizations now so dramatically juxtaposed is thus not only the most intense that could possibly have been arranged but it is also amplified and completed by a contrast in attitudes which guarantees that it will have a maximum effect. It is not altogether by chance that the representative of conquered eastern culture shows the assimilative capacities of a child prodigy; nor that the representative of western culture occupies the role of an omnipotent teacher. It is, rather, the result of that interior logic in events which makes it possible sometimes to define geography in terms of history, and vice versa. However, what remains is the question of actual relations between teacher and pupil; what will the former teach and what will the latter absorb?

When General MacArthur says, as he is wont to do, that Japan is a vacuum ready to be filled by western democracy, and that the Japanese are 'avid' to learn all about it, he is telling no more than the truth. Where he may be making a mistake is in the supposition that it is 'democracy' that appeals to them. It is not because they like democracy that they want to learn from Americans, it is because they like to learn anything, and democracy happens to be what Americans are trying to teach them.

It is precisely this eagerness to learn, this childish aptitude for

the perfect copy, that is at once the occupation's greatest promise and its greatest danger. It is its greatest promise because if we can utilize it properly, it may enable us to give western culture a seat in the Orient from which it might eventually work back through China and Russia and India towards Europe again, establishing a vast progressive spiral which would set a pattern for the centuries to come. It is its greatest danger because in itself it creates a dangerous illusion of success just when this is least justifiable.

In teaching democracy, Americans are likely to forget that whereas the essence of this doubtlessly admirable form of government is the desire to do things for oneself, our machinery for teaching it to the Japanese is a military government so compact that by comparison with Mussolini's famous bundle of sticks MacArthur's is a mere box of matches. The more avidly the Japanese 'learn democracy' from such a teacher, the more, in reality, they are practising obedience, which is something quite different from, if not indeed precisely the reverse of, democracy. And there seems some danger that the better the MacArthur regime seems to succeed in teaching the Japanese to govern themselves, the better it may actually succeed in teaching them to do something else entirely. Of course, MacArthur himself is quite aware of this danger and tries to circumvent it not only by removing restrictions as rapidly as possible but also by giving as little guidance as possible. Nonetheless, it would not be altogether surprising if the Japanese, with their wonderful sense of the literal copy, were to picture democracy as a procedure wherein the nation first voted and then asked a higher authority if it had voted the right way. When the higher authority of MacArthur is removed, the Japanese might be tempted to replace him with a similar institution of their own devising—which would leave us all just where we were when we started, or a little bit further back.

The occupation of the oldest country in the world by the newest is an entirely unprecedented situation and not one for which it is easy to lay down recommendations, let alone solid rules. However, it would be a grave mistake to suppose, even if the occupation's success to date were more real than apparent, which is a question that only time can settle, that this would argue much for its success in the future. The adaptability of the Japanese that has enabled them at least to seem to respond favourably to the



treatment MacArthur has given them, might just as well enable them to react quickly in an opposite direction, once the treatment were suspended or another one substituted for it. The latter, furthermore, is an ever present possibility as long as Russia, which is after all geographically much handier, retains its present missionary zeal.

Japanese social behaviour, and the childhood conditioning which determines it, are perhaps even more amenable to reform along Communist, than along democratic, lines; and while avidity for learning may enable the Japanese eventually to adopt American patterns, the same avidity would enable them even more readily to adopt Russian ones, which much more closely resemble their own pre-war regime. In short, while the defeat of Japan, and the occupation by the U.S., guarantees profound changes in Japan, it by no means guarantees the changes that at present seem to be in prospect there. And it is quite conceivable that, if certain developments were to occur, the Occupation would result not in the extension of European culture but in that of Communist culture. However, this would be predicated upon a complete and sudden withdrawal of outside supervision; and it may thus be considered an unlikely extreme. For the present at least, in suggesting the alternatives of the occupation's ultimate significance, it can be disregarded in favour of more moderate, and more likely, possibilities.

If it were not for Russia, which is after all an extraneous problem, MacArthur could run Japan with a kitchen cabinet, a household staff, and an aide to keep track of his appointments. As it is, the army of occupation is likely to dwindle in the next few years, even if more slowly than it otherwise might. It should, of course, be replaced by a group of first-class administrators and, even more important, first-class sociologists who could determine just how much and how well the Japanese are learning their lessons and how long they are likely to retain them. The reform of the Japanese should, of course, start not in the school but in the cradle but it would take a really comprehensive study of the national *mores*, as well as a really superb staff of administrators, to determine what changes in upbringing make for the desired results and see to it that these changes were adopted as eagerly by the Japanese as they probably would be, once their purpose was made clear. Nothing like this has ever been attempted before,

but then nothing like the conquest of Japan was ever attempted before either, and it seems a pity to throw away our chance after going to so much trouble to secure it. It is also true that Japan is like no other nation on earth, despite the fundamental similarity of its human beings to other human beings, and the present era is like no other era. New techniques in education and new methods of testing culture are available, and it requires only intelligent effort and willingness to apply them.

Unfortunately, as Americans proved in Europe after World War I, and are seemingly bent on proving there again, it is easy once the basic war aim, i.e. victory, has been achieved, to assume that other objectives, in terms of which the victory was defined, have been achieved also. Hence it may be wiser to guess at the final results of the occupation less from the optimistic basis of what should be done than from the more pessimistic one suggested by the past performance charts. According to these, what will probably happen is that MacArthur will quite properly decide that his part of the work is completed, and that without his presence, the whole project will start to go to seed. In the first place, MacArthur's successor will enjoy none of the vast prestige which is such an important factor in his regime; in the second place, as the war recedes into the past, the Japanese will tend to blame the occupation rather than the war for their economic miseries which are likely to grow worse instead of better; and in the third place, Washington, which was never designed to run such enterprises and is not equipped to do it, instead of taking more interest in the outcome, will take less, and send out fewer and poorer administrators, instead of more and better ones. The net result of all this may be that the Japanese will finally emerge from their novel experience with a smattering of democratic manners, but with no great change in their own basic conditioning attitude towards life. They would, to be sure, have no war potential and no wish to wage war, at least upon the U.S., for some time to come; but neither would they have derived a more minute share of the profit which the situation could be made to yield.

Of course the actual outcome may well be somewhere between the two latter extremes. The rewards for success and the penalties for failure are too great to enable Washington really to wash its hands of the whole matter, as it may be inclined to do. The Japanese themselves may, by studying their own situation from a

scientific viewpoint, correct some of the basic peculiarities of family life which lie at the root of their culture and behaviour patterns, and by so doing, reach a healthy but incomplete conformity with, rather than a false but complete approximation of, western culture. At what expense to their own culture such a conformity could be attained remains to be seen; but it certainly cannot, even under the best of circumstances, be attained without a sacrifice of much that makes them even now such a charming as well as such a bewildering anachronism.

The price that the Japanese pay will be, of course, part of the price of the world's painful consolidation, as though for an unlikely war with some planet in outer space, which seems to be the end product of the last century's improvement in communications and transport. But they will not pay it alone, for the world too will lose whatever they lose in the process. Nor is the challenge of Japan directed towards America alone; for American civilization, whatever its defects, is also European civilization; and it is European civilization that is being tested in Tokyo, more completely and more expensively than it has ever been tested before.

[This article is an extract from the book *Fallen Sun* which Appleton Century are bringing out in October]

## LIONEL TRILLING

# FREUD AND LITERATURE

THE Freudian psychology is the only systematic account of the human mind which, in point of subtlety and complexity, of interest and tragic power, deserves to stand beside the chaotic mass of psychological insights which literature has accumulated through the centuries. To pass from the reading of a great literary work to a treatise of academic psychology is to pass from one order of perception to another, but the human nature of the Freudian psychology is exactly the stuff upon which the poet has always exercised his art. It is therefore not surprising that the psycho-analytical theory has had a great effect upon literature. Yet the relationship is reciprocal and the effect of Freud upon literature has been no greater than the effect of literature upon Freud. When, on the occasion of the celebration of his seventieth birthday, Freud was greeted as the 'discoverer of the unconscious', he corrected the speaker and disclaimed the title. 'The poets and philosophers before me discovered the unconscious; what I discovered was the scientific method by which the unconscious can be studied.'

A lack of specific evidence prevents us from considering the particular literary 'influences' upon the founder of psycho-analysis; and besides, when we think of the men who so clearly anticipated many of Freud's own ideas—Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, for example—and then learn that he did not read their works until after he had formulated his own theories, we must see that particular influences cannot be in question here but that what we must deal with is nothing less than a whole *Zeitgeist*, a direction of thought. For psycho-analysis is one of the culminations of the Romanticist literature of the nineteenth century. If there is perhaps, a contradiction in the idea of a science standing upon the shoulders of a literature which avows itself inimical to science in so many ways, the contradiction will be resolved if we remember that this literature, despite its avowals, was itself scientific, for it was passionately devoted to a research into the self.

In showing the connection between Freud and this Romanticist tradition, it is difficult to know where to begin, but there might



be a certain aptness in starting even back of the tradition, as far back as 1762 with that dialogue of Diderot's called *Rameau's Nephew*. At any rate, certain men at the heart of nineteenth-century thought were agreed in finding a peculiar importance in this brilliant little work: Goethe translated it, Marx admired it, Hegel—as Marx reminded Engels in the letter which announced that he was sending the book as a gift—praised and expounded it at length, Shaw was impressed by it and Freud himself, as we know from a quotation in his *Introductory Lectures*, read it with the pleasure of agreement.

The dialogue takes place between Diderot himself and a nephew of the famous composer. The protagonist, the younger Rameau, is a despised, outcast, shameless fellow; Hegel calls him the 'distintegrated consciousness' and credits him with great wit, for it is he who breaks down all the normal social values and makes new combinations with the pieces. As for Diderot, the deuterogonist, he is what Hegel calls the 'honest consciousness', and Hegel considers him reasonable, decent and dull. It is quite clear that the author does not despise his Rameau and does not mean us to; Rameau is lustful and greedy, arrogant yet self-abasing, perceptive yet 'wrong', like a child—still, Diderot seems actually to be giving the fellow a kind of superiority over himself, as though Rameau represents the elements which, dangerous but wholly necessary, lie beneath the reasonable decorum of social life. It would, perhaps, be pressing too far to find in Rameau Freud's *id* and in Diderot Freud's *ego*; yet the connection does suggest itself; and at least we have here the perception which is to be the common characteristic of both Freud and Romanticism, the perception of the hidden element of human nature and of the opposition between the hidden and the visible.

From the self-exposure of Rameau to Rousseau's account of his own childhood is no great step; society might ignore or reject the idea of the 'immorality' which lies concealed in the beginning of the career of the 'good' man, just as it might turn away from Blake struggling to expound a psychology which would include the forces beneath the propriety of social man in general, but the idea of the hidden thing went forward to become one of the dominant notions of the age. The hidden element takes many forms and it is not always 'dark' and 'bad'; for Wordsworth, Coleridge and Burke what was hidden and unconscious was

wisdom and power, working even in despite of the conscious intellect, and for Matthew Arnold the mind was fed by streams buried deeper than we can know.

The mind has become far less simple; the devotion to the various forms of autobiography—itself an important fact in the tradition—provides abundant examples of the change that has taken place. Poets, making poetry by what seems to them almost a freshly discovered faculty, find that this new power may be conspired against by other agencies of the mind and even deprived of its freedom; the names of Wordsworth, Coleridge and Arnold at once occur to us again, and Freud quotes Schiller on the danger to the poet which lies in the merely analytical reason. And it is not only the poets who are threatened; educated and sensitive people throughout Europe become aware of the depredations the reason might make upon the affective life, as in the classic instance of John Stuart Mill.

We must also take into account the preoccupation—it began in the eighteenth century, even in the seventeenth—with children, women, peasants and savages, because their mental life, it is felt, is less overlaid than that of the educated adult male by the proprieties of social habit. With this preoccupation goes a concern with education and personal development, so consonant with the historical and evolutionary bias of the time. And we must certainly note the revolution in morals which took place at the instance (we might almost say) of the *Bildungsroman*, for in the novels fathered by Wilhelm Meister we get the almost complete identification of author and hero and of reader with both, and this identification suggests a leniency of moral judgement! The autobiographical novel has a further influence upon the moral sensibility by its exploitation of all the modulations of motive and by its hinting that we may not judge a man by any single moment in his life without taking into account the determining past and the expiating and fulfilling future.

It is difficult to know how to go on, for the further we look the more literary affinities to Freud we find, and even if we limit ourselves to bibliography we can at best be incomplete. Yet we must mention the sexual revolution that was being demanded—by Shelley, for example, by the Schlegel of *Lucinde*, by George Sand, and later and more critically by Ibsen; the belief in the sexual origin of art, baldly stated by Tieck, more subtly by

Schopenhauer; the investigation of sexual maladjustment by Stendhal, the quality of whose observations on erotic feeling are in the direct line of Freud. Again and again we see the effective, utilitarian ego being relegated to an inferior position and the plea being made on behalf of the anarchic and self-indulgent *id*. We find the energetic exploitation of the idea of the mind as a divisible thing, one part of which can contemplate and mock the other. It is not a far remove from this to Dostoievsky's brilliant instances of ambivalent feeling. Novalis brings in the preoccupation with the death-wish, and this is linked on the one hand with sleep and, on the other hand, with the perception of the perverse, self-destroying impulses, which in turn leads us to that fascination by the horrible which we find in Shelley, Poe and Baudelaire. And always there is the profound interest in the dream—'Our dreams', said Gerard de Nerval, 'are a second life'—and in the nature of metaphor, which reaches its climax in Rimbaud and the later Symbolists, of metaphor becoming less and less communicative as it approaches the relative autonomy of the dream life.

But perhaps we must stop to ask, since these are the components of the *Zeitgeist* from which Freud himself developed, whether it can be said that Freud did indeed produce a wide literary effect? What is it that Freud added that the tendency of literature itself would not have developed without him? If we were looking for a writer who showed the Freudian influence, Proust would perhaps come to mind as readily as anyone else; the very title of his novel—in French more than in English—suggests an enterprise of psycho-analysis and scarcely less so does his method—the investigation of sleep, of sexual deviation, of the ways of association, the almost obsessive interest in metaphor; at these and at many other points the 'influence' might be shown. Yet I believe it is true that Proust did not read Freud. Or again, exegesis of *The Waste Land* reads remarkably like the interpretation of a dream, yet we know that Eliot's methods were prepared for him not by Freud but by other poets.

Nevertheless, it is of course true that Freud's influence on literature has been very great. Much of it is so pervasive that its extent is scarcely to be determined; in one form or another, frequently in perversions or absurd simplifications, it has been infused into our life and become a component of our culture of which it is now hard to be specifically aware. In biography its

effect was sensational but not fortunate. The Freudian biographers were for the most part Guildensterns who seemed to know the pipes but could not pluck out the heart of the mystery. In criticism the situation has been sad, for reasons which I shall try to suggest later in this essay.

The names of the creative writers who have been more or less Freudian in tone or assumption would, of course, be legion. Only a relatively small number, however, have made serious use of the Freudian ideas. Freud himself seems to have thought this was as it should be: he is said to have expected very little of the works that were sent to him by writers with inscriptions of gratitude for all they had learned from him. The Surrealists have, with a certain inconsistency, depended upon Freud for the 'scientific' sanction of their programme. Kafka, with an apparent awareness of what he was doing, has explored the Freudian conceptions of guilt and punishment, of the dream and of the fear of the father. Thomas Mann, whose tendency, as he himself says, was always in the direction of Freud's interests, has been most susceptible to the Freudian anthropology, finding a special charm in the theories of myths and magical practices. James Joyce, with his interest in the numerous states of receding consciousness, with his use of words as things and of words which point to more than one thing, with his pervading sense of the interrelation and interpenetration of all things, and, not least important, his treatment of familiar themes, has perhaps most thoroughly and consciously exploited Freud's ideas.

## II

Yet although it will be clear enough how much of Freud's thought has significant affinity with the Romanticist tradition, we must see with no less distinctness how much of his system is militantly rationalistic. Thomas Mann is at fault when, in his first essay on Freud, he makes it seem that the 'Apollonian', the rationalistic, side of psycho-analysis is, while certainly important and wholly admirable, somehow secondary and even accidental. He gives us a Freud who is committed to the 'night side' of life. Not at all: the rationalistic element of Freud is foremost; before everything else he is positivistic. If the interpreter of dreams came to medical science through Goethe, as he tells us he did, he entered not by way of the *Walpurgisnacht* but by the essay which



played so important a part in the lives of so many scientists of the nineteenth century, the famous disquisition on Nature.

This correction is needed not only for accuracy but also for any understanding of Freud's attitude to art. And for that understanding we must see how intense is the passion with which Freud believes that positivistic rationalism, in its golden age, pre-Revolutionary purity, is the very form and pattern of intellectual virtue. The aim of psycho-analysis, he says, is the control of the night side of life. It is 'to strengthen the ego, to make it more independent of the super-ego, to widen its field of vision, and so to extend the organization of the *id*'. Where *id* was, '... that is, where all the irrational, non-logical, pleasure-seeking dark forces were ...' there shall ego be, '... that is, intelligence and control. It is', he concludes, with a reminiscence of Faust, 'reclamation work, like the draining of the Zuyder Zee.' This passage is quoted by Mann when, in taking up the subject of Freud a second time, he does indeed speak of Freud's positivistic programme; but even here the bias induced by Mann's artistic interest in the 'night side' prevents him from giving this aspect of Freud its proper emphasis. Freud would never have accepted the role which Mann seems to give him as the legitimizer of the myth and the dark irrational ways of the mind. If Freud discovered the darkness for science he never endorsed it. On the contrary, his rationalism supports all the ideas of Enlightenment that deny validity to myth or religion; he holds to a simple materialism, to a simple determinism, to a rather limited sort of epistemology. No great scientist of our day has thundered so articulately and so fiercely against all those who would sophisticate with metaphysics the scientific principles that were good enough for the nineteenth century. Conceptualism or pragmatism are anathema to him, and this, when we consider the nature of his own brilliant scientific methods, has surely an element of paradox in it.

From his rationalistic positivism comes much of Freud's strength and all of his weakness. The strength is the fine, clear tenacity of his positive aims, the goal of therapy, the desire to bring to men a decent measure of earthly happiness. But upon the rationalism must also be placed the blame for his rather naïve scientific principles which consist largely of claiming for his theories a perfect correspondence with an external reality, a position which, for those who admire Freud, and especially for

those who take seriously his views on art, is troublesome in the extreme.

Now Freud has, I believe, much to tell us about art, but whatever is suggestive in him is not to be found in those of his works in which he deals expressly with art itself. Freud is neither insensitive to art—on the contrary—nor does he ever intend to speak of it with contempt. Indeed, he speaks of it with a real tenderness and counts it one of the true charms of the good life. Of artists, especially of writers, he speaks with admiration and even a kind of awe, though perhaps what he most appreciates in literature are specific emotional insights and observations; he speaks of literary men, because they have understood the part played in life by the hidden motives, as the precursors and coadjutors of his own science.

And yet eventually Freud speaks of art with what we must indeed call contempt. Art, he tells us, is a 'substitute gratification', and as such is 'an illusion in contrast to reality'. Unlike most illusions, however, art is 'almost always harmless and beneficent' for the reason that 'it does not seek to be anything but an illusion. Save in the case of a few people who are, one might say, obsessed by Art, it never dares make any attack on the realm of reality.' One of its chief functions is to serve as a 'narcotic'. It shares the characteristics of the dream, whose element of distortion Freud calls a 'sort of inner dishonesty'. As for the artist, he is virtually in the same category with the neurotic. 'By such separation of imagination and intellectual capacity', Freud says of the hero of a novel, 'he is destined to be a poet or a neurotic, and he belongs to that race of beings whose realm is not of this world.'

Now there is nothing in the logic of psycho-analytical thought which requires Freud to have these opinions. But there is a great deal in the practice of the psycho-analytical therapy which makes it understandable that Freud, unprotected by an adequate philosophy, should be tempted to take the line he does. The analytical therapy deals with illusion. The patient comes to the physician to be cured, let us say, of a fear of walking in the street. The fear is real enough, there is no illusion on that score, and it produces all the physical symptoms of a more rational fear, the sweating palms, pounding heart and shortened breath. But the patient knows that there is no cause for the fear—or, rather, that there is, as he says, no 'real cause': there are no machine-guns, man-traps or

tigers in the street. The physician knows, however, that there is indeed a 'real' cause for the fear, though it has nothing at all to do with what is or is not in the street; the cause is within the patient, and the process of the therapy will be to discover, by gradual steps, what this real cause is and so free the patient from its effects.

Now the patient, in coming to the physician, and the physician in accepting the patient, make a tacit compact about reality; for their purpose they agree to the limited reality by which we get our living, win our loves, catch our trains and our colds. The therapy will undertake to train the patient in proper ways of coping with this reality. The patient, of course, has been dealing with this reality all along, but in the wrong way. For Freud there are two ways of dealing with external reality. One is practical, effective, positive; this is the way of the conscious self, of the ego which must be made independent of the super-ego and extend its organization over the *id*, and it is the right way. The anti-thetical way may be called, for our purpose now, the 'fictional' way. Instead of doing something about, or to, external reality, the individual who uses this way does something to, or about, his affective states. The most common and 'normal' example of this is day-dreaming in which we give ourselves a certain pleasure by imagining our difficulties solved or our desires gratified. Then, too, as Freud discovered, sleeping dreams are, in much more complicated ways, and even though quite unpleasant, at the service of this same 'fictional' activity. And in ways yet more complicated and yet more unpleasant, the actual neurosis—from which our patient suffers—deals with an external reality which the mind considers still more unpleasant than the painful neurosis itself.

For Freud as psycho-analytic practitioner there are, we may say, the polar extremes of reality and illusion. Reality is an honorific word, and it means what is *there*; illusion is a pejorative word, and it means a response to what is *not there*. The didactic nature of a course of psycho-analysis no doubt requires a certain firm crudeness in making the distinction; it is, after all, aimed not at theoretical refinement but at practical effectiveness. The polar extremes are practical reality and neurotic illusion, the latter judged by the former. This, no doubt, is as it should be; the patient is not being trained in metaphysics and epistemology.

We may say, however, that Freud has two views of the mind. One view assumes that the mind, for good as well as bad, helps create its reality by selection and evaluation. In this view, which is the typically Freudian one, reality is malleable and subject to creation; it is not static but is, rather, a series of situations which are dealt with in their own terms. But beside this view of the mind stands the view which arises from Freud's therapeutic-practical assumptions; in this view, the mind deals with a reality which is quite fixed and static, a reality that is wholly 'given' and not (to use a phrase of Dewey's) 'taken'. In his epistemological utterances, Freud insists on this second view, although it is not easy to see why he should do so. For the reality to which he wishes to reconcile the neurotic patient is, after all, a 'taken' and not a 'given' reality. It is the reality of social life and of value, conceived and maintained by the human mind and will. Love, morality, honour, esteem—these are the components of a created reality. If we are to call art an illusion then we must call most of the activities and satisfactions of the ego illusions; Freud, of course, has no desire to call them that.

What, then, is the difference between, on the one hand, the dream and the neurosis, and, on the other hand, art? That they have certain common elements is, of course, clear; that unconscious processes are at work in both would be denied by no poet or critic; they share too, though in different degrees, the element of fantasy. But there is a vital difference between them which Charles Lamb saw so clearly in his defence of the sanity of true genius: '... The ... poet dreams being awake. He is not possessed by his subject but has dominion over it.'

That is the whole difference: for the poet is in command of his fantasy, while it is exactly the mark of the neurotic that he is possessed by his fantasy. And there is a further difference which Lamb states: speaking of the poet's relation to reality (he calls it Nature), he says, 'He is beautifully loyal to that sovereign directress, even when he appears most to betray her'; the illusions of art are made to serve the purpose of a closer and truer relation with reality. Jacques Barzun, in an acute and sympathetic discussion of Freud, puts the matter well: 'A good analogy between art and *dreaming* has led him to a false one between art and *sleeping*. But the difference between a work of art and a dream is precisely this, that the work of art *leads us back to the outer reality by taking*



*account of it.*' Freud's assumption of the almost exclusively hedonistic nature and purpose of art bar him from the perception of this.

Of the distinction that must be made between the artist and the neurotic Freud is, of course, aware; he tells us that the artist is not like the neurotic in that he knows how to find a way back from the world of imagination, and 'once more get a firm foothold in reality'. This, however, seems to mean no more than that reality is to be dealt with when the artist suspends the practice of his art; and at least once when Freud speaks of art dealing with reality, he actually means the rewards that a successful artist can win. He does not deny to art its function and its usefulness: it has a therapeutic effect in releasing mental tension; it serves the cultural purpose of acting as a 'substitute gratification' to reconcile men to the sacrifices they have made for culture's sake; it promotes the social sharing of highly valued emotional experiences, and it recalls men to their cultural ideals. This is not everything that some of us would find that art does, yet even this is a good deal for a 'narcotic' to do.

### III

I started by saying that Freud's ideas could tell us something about art, but so far I have done little more than try to show that Freud's very conception of art is inadequate. Perhaps, then, the suggestiveness lies in the application of the analytic method to specific works of art, or to the artist himself? I do not think so; and it is only fair to say that Freud himself was aware both of the limits and the limitations of psycho-analysis in art, even though he does not always, in practice, submit to the former or admit the latter.

Freud has, for example, no desire to encroach upon the artistic autonomy; he does not wish us to read his monograph on Leonardo and then say of the 'Madonna of the Rocks' that it is a fine example of homosexual, autoerotic painting. If he asserts that in investigation the 'psychiatrist cannot yield to the author', he immediately insists that the 'author cannot yield to the psychiatrist', and he warns the latter not to 'coarsen everything' by using for all human manifestations the 'substantially useless and awkward terms' of clinical procedure. He admits, even while asserting that the sense of beauty probably derives from sexual feeling, that psycho-analysis 'has less to say about beauty than

about most other things'. He confesses to a theoretical indifference to the form of art and restricts himself to its content. Tone, feeling, style and the modification that part makes upon part he does not consider. 'The layman', he says, 'may expect perhaps too much from analysis . . . for it must be admitted that it throws no light upon the two problems which probably interest him the most. It can do nothing toward elucidating the nature of the artistic gift, nor can it explain the means by which the artist works—artistic technique.'

What, then, does the analytical method claim to do? Two things: explain the 'inner meanings' of the work of art and explain the temperament of the artist as man.

A famous example of the method is the attempt to solve the 'problem' of *Hamlet* as suggested by Freud and as carried out by Dr. Ernest Jones, his early and distinguished follower. Dr. Jones's monograph is a work of painstaking scholarship and of really masterly ingenuity. The research undertakes not only the clearing up of the mystery of Hamlet's character, but also the discovery of 'the clue to much of the deeper workings of Shakespeare's mind'. Part of the mystery in question is, of course, why Hamlet, after he had so definitely resolved to do so, did not avenge upon his hated uncle his father's death. But there is another mystery to the play—what Freud calls 'the mystery of its effect', its magical appeal that draws so much interest toward it. Recalling the many failures to solve the riddle of the play's charm, he wonders if we are to be driven to the conclusion 'that its magical appeal rests solely upon the impressive thoughts in it and the splendour of its language'. Freud believes that we can find a source of power beyond this.

We remember that Freud has told us that the meaning of a dream is its intention, and we may assume that the meaning of a drama is its intention, too. The Jones research undertakes to discover what it was that Shakespeare intended to say about Hamlet. It finds that the intention was wrapped by the author in a dream-like obscurity because it touched so deeply both his personal life and the moral life of the world; what Shakespeare intended to say is that Hamlet cannot act because he is incapacitated by the guilt he feels at his unconscious attachment to his mother. There is, I think, nothing to be quarrelled with in the statement that there is an Oedipus situation in *Hamlet*; and if

psycho-analysis has indeed added a new point of interest to the play, that is to its credit.<sup>1</sup> And, just so, there is no reason to quarrel with Freud's conclusion when he undertakes to give us the meaning of *King Lear* by a tortuous tracing of the mythological implications of the theme of the three caskets, of the relation of the caskets to the Norns, the Fates and the Graces, of the connection of these triadic females with Lear's daughters, of the transmutation of the death-goddess into the love-goddess and the identification of Cordelia with both, all to the conclusion that the meaning of *King Lear* is to be found in the tragic refusal of an old man to 'renounce love, choose death and make friends with the necessity of dying'. There is something both beautiful and suggestive in this, but it is not *the* meaning of *King Lear* any more than the Œdipus motive is *the* meaning of *Hamlet*.

It is not here a question of the validity of the evidence, though that is of course important. We must, rather, object to the conclusions of Freud and Dr. Jones on the ground that its proponents do not have an adequate conception of what an artistic meaning is. There is no single meaning to any work of art; this is true, not merely because it is better that it should be true—that is, because it makes art a richer thing—but because historical and personal experience show it to be true. Changes in historical context and in personal mood change the meaning of a work and indicate to us that artistic understanding is not a question of fact but of value. Even if the author's intention were—as it cannot be—precisely determinable, the meaning of a work cannot lie in the author's intention alone. It must also lie in its effect. We can say of a volcanic eruption on an inhabited island that it 'means terrible suffering', but if the island is uninhabited or easily evacuated it means something else. In short, the audience partly determines the meaning of the work. But although Freud sees something of this when he says that in addition to the author's intention we must take into account the mystery of *Hamlet's* effect, he nevertheless

<sup>1</sup> However, A. C. Bradley, in his discussion of *Hamlet* (*Shakespearian Tragedy*), states clearly the intense sexual disgust which Hamlet feels and which, for Bradley, helps account for his uncertain purpose; and Bradley was anticipated in this view by Löning. It is well known, and Dover Wilson has lately emphasized the point, that to an Elizabethan audience Hamlet's mother was not merely, as to a modern audience she seems, tasteless in hurrying to marry Claudius but actually adulterous in marrying him at all because he was, as her brother-in-law, within the forbidden degrees.

goes on to speak as if, historically, *Hamlet's* effect had been single and brought about solely by the 'magical' power of the *Œdipus* motive to which, unconsciously, we so violently respond. Yet there was, we know, a period when *Hamlet* was relatively in eclipse, and it has always been scandalously true of the French, a people not without filial feeling, that they have been somewhat indifferent to the 'magical appeal' of *Hamlet*.

I do not think that anything I have said about the inadequacies of the Freudian method of interpretation limits the number of ways we can deal with a work of art. Bacon remarked that experiment may twist nature on the rack to wring out its secrets, and criticism may use any instruments upon a work of art to find its meanings. The elements of art are not limited to the world of art. They reach into life and whatever extraneous knowledge of them we gain—for example, by research into the historical context of the work—may quicken our feelings for the work itself and even enter legitimately into those feelings. Then, too, anything we may learn about the artist himself may be enriching and legitimate. But one research into the mind of the artist is simply not practicable, however legitimate it may theoretically be. That is, the investigation of his unconscious intention as it exists apart from the work itself. Criticism understands that the artist's statement of his conscious intention, though it is sometimes useful, cannot finally determine meaning. How much less can we know from his unconscious intention considered as something apart from the whole work? Surely very little that goes beyond interesting speculation; certainly very little that can be called conclusive or scientific. For, as Freud himself points out, we are not in a position to question the artist; we must apply the technique of dream analysis to his symbols, but, as Freud says with some heat, those people do not understand his theory who think that a dream may be interpreted without the dreamer's free-association with the multitudinous details of his dream.

We have so far ignored the aspect of the method which finds the solution to the 'mystery' of such a play as *Hamlet* in the temperament of Shakespeare himself and then illuminates the mystery of Shakespeare's temperament by means of the solved mystery of the play. Here it will be amusing to remember that by 1935 Freud had become converted to the theory that it was not Shakespeare of Stratford, but the Earl of Oxford who wrote



the plays, thus invalidating the important bit of evidence that Shakespeare's father died shortly before the composition of *Hamlet*. This is destructive enough to Dr. Jones's argument, but the evidence from which Dr. Jones draws conclusions about literature fails on grounds more relevant to literature itself. For when Dr. Jones, by means of his analysis of *Hamlet*, takes us into 'the deeper workings of Shakespeare's mind', he does so with a perfect confidence that he knows what *Hamlet* is and what its relation to Shakespeare is. It is, he tells us, Shakespeare's 'chief masterpiece', so far superior to all his other works that it may be placed on 'an entirely separate level'. And then, having established his ground on an entirely unacceptable literary judgement, Dr. Jones goes on to tell us that *Hamlet* 'probably expresses the core of Shakespeare's philosophy and outlook as no other work of his does'. That is, all the contradictory or complicating or modifying testimony of the other plays is dismissed on the basis of Dr. Jones's acceptance of the peculiar position which, he believes, *Hamlet* occupies in the Shakespeare canon. And it is upon this entirely inadmissible judgement that Dr. Jones bases his argument: 'It may be expected *therefore*, that anything which will give us the key to the inner meaning of the play will *necessarily* give us the clue to much of the deeper workings of Shakespeare's mind.'

I should be sorry if it appeared that I am trying to say that psycho-analysis can have nothing to do with literature. I am sure that the opposite is so. For example, the whole notion of rich ambiguity in literature, of the interplay between the apparent meaning and the latent—not 'hidden'—meaning, has been reinforced by the Freudian concepts, perhaps even received its first impetus from them. Of late years, the more perceptive psychoanalysts have surrendered the early pretensions of their teachers to deal 'scientifically' with literature, and that is all to the good, and when a study as modest and precise as Dr. Franz Alexander's essay on *Henry IV* comes along, an essay which pretends not to 'solve' but only to illuminate the subject, we have something worth having. Dr. Alexander undertakes nothing more than to say that in the development of Prince Hal we see the classic struggle of the ego to come to normal adjustment, beginning with the rebellion against the father, going on to the conquest of the super-ego (Hotspur, with his rigid notions of honour and

glory), then to the conquest of the *id* (Falstaff, with his anarchic self-indulgence), then to the identification with the father (the crown scene) and the assumption of mature responsibility. An analysis of this sort is not momentous and not exclusive of other meanings; perhaps it does no more than point up and formulate what we all have already seen. It has the tact to *accept* the play and does not, like Dr. Jones's study of *Hamlet*, search for a 'hidden motive' and a 'deeper working' and thus imply that there is a reality to which the play stands in the relation that a dream stands to the wish that generates it and from which it is separable; it is this reality, this 'deeper working' which, according to Dr. Jones, produced the play. But *Hamlet* is not merely the product of Shakespeare's thought, it is the very instrument of his thought and if meaning is intention, Shakespeare did not intend the Œdipus motive or anything less than *Hamlet*; if meaning is effect, then it is *Hamlet* which affects us, not the Œdipus motive: *Coriolanus* also deals, and very terribly, with the Œdipus motive, but the effect of the one drama is very different from the effect of the other.

#### IV

If, then, we can accept neither Freud's conception of the place of art in life nor his application of the analytical method, what is it that he contributes to our understanding of art or to its practice? In my opinion, what he contributes quite outweighs his errors; it is of the greatest importance, and it lies in no specific statement that he makes about art but is, rather, implicit in his whole conception of the mind.

For, of all mental systems, the Freudian psychology is the one which makes poetry indigenous to the very constitution of the mind. Indeed, the mind, as Freud sees it, is in the greater part of its tendency, exactly a poetry-making organ. This puts the case too strongly, no doubt, for it seems to make the working of the unconscious mind equivalent to poetry itself, forgetting that between the unconscious mind and the finished poem there supervene the social intention and the formal control of the conscious mind. Yet the statement has at least the virtue of counterbalancing the belief, so commonly expressed or implied, that the very opposite is true, and that poetry is a kind of beneficent aberration of the mind's right course.

Freud has not merely naturalized poetry; he has discovered its status as a pioneer settler, and he sees it as a method of thought. Often enough he tries to show how, as a method of thought, it is unreliable and ineffective for conquering reality; yet he himself is forced to use it in the very shaping of his own science, as when he speaks of the topography of the mind and tells us with a kind of defiant apology that the metaphors of space-relationship which he is using are really most inexact since the mind is not a thing of space at all, but that there is no other way of conceiving the difficult idea except by metaphor. In the eighteenth century Vico spoke of the metaphorical, imagistic language of the early stages of culture; it was left to Freud to discover how, in a scientific age, we still feel and think in figurative formations and to create, what psycho-analysis is, a science of tropes, of metaphor and its variants, synecdoche and metonymy.

Freud showed, too, how the mind, in one of its parts, could work without logic, yet not without that directing purpose, that control of intent from which, perhaps it might be said, logic springs. For the unconscious mind works without the syntactical conjunctions which are logic's essence. It recognizes no *because*, no *therefore*, no *but*; such ideas as similarity, agreement and community, for example, are expressed in dreams imagistically by compressing the elements into a unity. The unconscious mind in its struggle with the conscious always turns from the general to the concrete and finds the tangible trifle more congenial than the large abstraction. Freud discovered in the very organization of the mind those mechanisms by which art makes its effects, such devices as the condensations of meanings and the displacement of accent.

All this is perhaps obvious enough and, though I should like to develop it in proportion both to its importance and to the space I have given to disagreement with Freud, I will not press it further. For there are two other elements in Freud's thought which, in conclusion, I should like to introduce as of great weight in their bearing on art.

Of these, one is a specific idea which, in the middle of his career (1920), Freud put forward in his essay, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. The essay itself is a speculative attempt to solve a perplexing problem in clinical analysis, but its relevance to literature is inescapable, as Freud sees well enough, even though his perception

of its critical importance is not sufficiently strong to make him revise his earlier views of the nature and function of art. The idea is one which stands besides Aristotle's notion of the catharsis, in part to supplement, in part to modify it.

Freud has come upon certain facts which are not to be reconciled with his earlier theory of the dream. According to this theory, all dreams, even the unpleasant ones, could be understood upon analysis to have the intention of fulfilling the dreamer's wishes. They were in the service of what Freud calls the Pleasure-principle, which is opposed to the Reality-principle. It is, of course, this explanation of the dream which had so largely conditioned Freud's theory of art. But now there is thrust upon him the necessity for reconsidering the theory of the dream, for it was found that in cases of war-neurosis—what we once called shell-shock—the patient, with the utmost anguish, recurred in his dreams to the very situation, distressing as it was, which had precipitated his neurosis. It seemed impossible to interpret these dreams by any assumption of a hedonistic intent. Nor did there seem to be the usual amount of distortion in them: the patient recurred to the terrible initiatory situation with great literalness. And the same pattern of psychic behaviour could be observed in the play of children; there were some games which, far from fulfilling wishes, seemed to concentrate upon the representation of those aspects of the child's life which were most unpleasant and threatening to his happiness.

To explain such mental activities Freud evolved a theory for which he refuses to claim much but to which, it is obvious, he attaches the greatest importance. He first makes the assumption that there is indeed in the psychic life a repetition-compulsion which goes beyond the Pleasure-principle. Such a compulsion cannot be meaningless, it must have an intent. And that intent, Freud comes to believe, is exactly and literally the developing of fear. 'These dreams', he says, 'are attempts at restoring control of the stimuli by developing apprehension, the pretermission of which caused the traumatic neurosis.' The dream, that is, is the effort to reconstruct the bad situation in order that the failure to meet it may be recouped; in these dreams there is no obscured intent to evade but only an attempt to meet the situation, to make a new effort of control. And in the play of children it seems to be that 'the child repeats even the unpleasant experiences because



through his own activity he gains a far more thorough mastery of the strong impression than was possible by mere passive experience'.

Freud, at this point, can scarcely help being put in mind of tragic drama; nevertheless, he does not wish to believe that this effort to come to mental grips with a situation is involved in the attraction of tragedy. He is, we might say, under the influence of the Aristotelean tragic theory which emphasizes a qualified hedonism through suffering. But the pleasure involved in tragedy is perhaps an ambiguous one; and sometimes we must feel that the famous sense of cathartic resolution is perhaps the result of glossing over terror with beautiful language rather than an evacuation of it. And sometimes the terror even bursts through the language to stand stark and isolated from the play, as does *Cædipus'* sightless and bleeding face. At any rate, the Aristotelean theory does not deny another function for tragedy (and for comedy, too) which is suggested by Freud's theory of the traumatic neurosis—what might be called the *mithradatic* function, by which tragedy is used as the homeopathic administration of pain to inure ourselves to the greater pain which life will force upon us. There is in the cathartic theory of tragedy, as it is usually understood, a conception of tragedy's function which is too negative and which inadequately suggests the sense of active mastery which tragedy can give.

In this essay, in which he sets forth the conception of the mind embracing its own pain for some vital purpose, Freud also expresses a provisional assent to the idea (earlier stated, as he reminds us, by Schopenhauer) that there is perhaps a human drive which makes of death the final and desired goal. The two ideas form the crown of Freud's broader speculation on the life of man. Their quality of grim poetry is characteristic of Freud's system and the ideas it generates for him.

And as much as anything else that Freud gives to literature, this quality of his thought is, I feel, important. Although the artist is never finally determined in his work by the intellectual systems about him, he cannot avoid their influence; and it can be said of various competing systems that some hold more promise for the artist than others. When, for example, we think of the simple humanitarian optimism which, for a decade, has been so pervasive, we must see that not only has it been politically and philosophically

inadequate, but also that it implies, by the smallness of its view of the varieties of human possibility, a kind of check on the creative faculties. There is, in Freud's view of life, no such limitation implied. To be sure, certain elements of his system seem hostile to the usual notions of man's dignity. Like every great critic of human nature—and Freud is that—he finds in human pride the ultimate cause of human wretchedness, and he takes pleasure in knowing that his ideas stand with those of Copernicus and Darwin in making pride more difficult to maintain. Yet the Freudian man is, I venture to think, a creature of far more dignity and far more interest than the man which any other modern system has been able to conceive. Despite popular belief to the contrary, man, as Freud conceives him, is not to be understood by any simple formula (such as sex) but is rather an inextricable tangle of culture and biology. And not being simple, he is not simply good; he has, as Freud says somewhere, a kind of hell within him from which rise everlastingly the impulses which threaten his civilization. He has the faculty of imagining for himself more in the way of pleasure and satisfaction than he can possibly achieve. Everything that he gains he pays for in more than equal coin; compromise and the compounding with defeat constitute his best way of getting through the world. His best qualities are the result of a struggle whose outcome is tragic. Yet he is a creature of love; it is Freud's sharpest criticism of the Adlerian psychology that to aggression it gives everything and to love nothing at all.

What one senses always in Freud is how little cynicism there is in his thought. His desire for man is only that he should be human, and to this end his science is devoted. No view of life to which the artist responds can insure the quality of his work—how true this is can be proved from the innumerable novels made up of Freudian tags—but the poetic qualities of Freud's own principles, which are so clearly in the line of the classic tragic realism, suggest that this is a view which does not narrow and simplify the human world for the artist, but, on the contrary, opens and complicates it.

ROBERT LOWRY

## LAW AND ORDER

THERE was a speed limit but they didn't pay any attention, they were in no mood to give a good goddamn about anything and they drove the command car for all it was worth south down the highway toward Rome. They were in terrific spirits after the unbelievable good luck of getting the passes to Rome for New Year's Eve, away from their lousy pup tents and the sound of guns and the snow. There'd been no snow since they'd left the mountains fifty miles behind them and now at eight-thirty it was a crisp clear moonless night and it was New Year's Eve in 1944—Rome was ahead of them, Rome, female and civilian, Rome, like a big shiny toy that was theirs to play with, to be bawdy and loud in, to lose themselves and the war in completely.

They were three American Fifth Army infantrymen in a fast command car driving like mad down a highway in Italy toward everything they wanted in this country. In June they'd helped storm Rome, come through it behind the tanks—it had belonged to them then. It would belong to them again, they were burning the miles, putting the war behind them. With the begrudged passes they'd gotten the last minute, and the battered car with the white star on the hood, they were going back—to the fabulous city, to the great day of their lives.

'Gimme that bottle,' Muggleston said. He was a small bulldog-faced taxi driver from the Bronx and he did everything quick, including taking the big drink of cognac. 'And gimme that city.' He gasped with the stiff throatful. 'Here,' he shoved the bottle under the driver's nose, 'drink some of that stuff and see if you can't get Minnie into high gear. What're you crawlin' along like this for? You want us to spend the night on the road?'

Tex Gorman drank with one hand but didn't let his foot up from the accelerator. Always quiet, always aloof, never smiling, he was a skinny red-haired fellow who had the D.S.M. for killing eight Germans at Salerno. Tex Gorman was a corporal and Muggleston and Fat Stuff Banion were P.F.C.s. They were all three crowded into the front seat and feeling good and warm with the cognac.

'Maybe even the war will end tonight,' Fat Stuff said. 'They're in Saarbrucken tonight.'

'They're in Saarbrucken and we're in crap,' Muggleston said, drinking again.

'Wait'll you get some beautiful piece up there in one of them double beds and you'll change your mind,' Fat Stuff laughed. Of the three, only he was easy-going, laughing after everything he said. Muggleston was high-pressured and loud and Tex was aloof, a Texas kid who'd lived all his life on a farm and had somehow come to take everything seriously, even the army.

'I guess you expect the whole town in the street,' Muggleston said.

'Hell yes I do,' Fat Stuff laughed. 'The whole goddamn town. Especially the women.'

'Especially the women!' Muggleston shouted, and took another drink.

'Rome will be a madhouse tonight,' Fat Stuff laughed. 'Rome will be better than in June.'

'Maybe all the whores'll be puttin' out free on New Year's!' Muggleston shouted.

'They'll all be screaming "Hurrah for the Americani! Hurrah for Singer Sewing Machine!"' Fat Stuff laughed.

'Here, have another drink,' said Muggleston, shoving Fat Stuff. 'Hey, driver, let's drive this thing.'

'We're going to Rome on New Year's Eve!' Fat Stuff said, beginning to shout almost as loud as little Muggleston. 'We're going to do it all in one night!'

'We're going to get the syph., the clap, and blueballs, all for free!' Muggleston shouted.

'To the syph. and the clap and the blueballs!' Fat Stuff shouted, and took a big drink. 'All for free!'

'I'm drivin',' Tex said, not feeling that good.

'What town is this?' Fat Stuff asked, quieter now.

They were in the outskirts of Rome. The streets were dark, nobody around.

'*Stars and Stripes* said it'd be all lit up tonight,' Tex said. '*Stars and Stripes* said there wouldn't be any curfew.'

'To hell with *Stars and Stripes*,' Fat Stuff said. 'It tells you you go home after twenty-four months overseas and here I am in number twenty-eight.'



'You go home in a box in twenty-four months,' said Muggleston.

'No, it really did say that,' Tex said. 'And look at it.'

'These are the suburbs,' Muggleston announced authoritatively. 'Everybody's uptown.'

'Hey, let's take off our helmet liners,' Fat Stuff said. 'What the hell are we wearing these helmet liners for? You'd think we was soldiers from up front.'

They all took off their helmet liners.

'The cognac's all gone,' Muggleston said, looking at the empty bottle disappointedly. Fat Stuff took it out of his hand and threw it—they heard the splash of glass behind them.

'First bottle's all gone, but we're heading for bottles two, three and four, fast,' Fat Stuff said.

'And women,' said Muggleston.

'I bet you all the girls will be dancing in the middle of Via Tritone,' Fat Stuff laughed.

Tex looked at him seriously. 'Do you really think so?'

'Yes, I really think everything tonight. We gotta find another bottle quick.'

'Another bottle,' Muggleston said. He was feeling best of all. 'And goodbye to the f—— army.'

The Villa Borghese is an enormous park atop one of Rome's tallest hills. The American Red Cross had taken over the casino there and made of it an enlisted men's club, where cookies and coffee were sold and where ping-pong could be played. Across from the casino was a parking lot reserved for G.I. vehicles.

But when, at nine that night, Fat Stuff and Tex and Muggleston arrived to leave their car at the parking lot they found the casino dark.

'I could use a doughnut,' Fat Stuff said.

'We got more important things to consider,' Muggleston said. 'We'll get some eggs and stuff down in some wop house.'

They came out through the arch in the old Roman wall to a street that went winding down the hill into the heart of the town. But that street was completely dark. They started down. 'Looks like nobody's around,' Tex said. And then they saw a G.I. across the street.

'Hey, where are all the lights?' Muggleston shouted.

The G.I. stopped and looked over at them. 'Yer askin' me,' he said. His voice sounded bitter—the wind carried it away from them, so that it seemed to come from a long way off.

'Why them dirty liars,' Tex said, personally betrayed.

'To hell with lights. Who wants lights?' Muggleston demanded loudly. 'What I want don't need no lights.'

They walked faster, bent forward against the wind, shoved their frozen fingers into their pockets.

'Boy, wait'll you see the swell babes we find around the square down here,' Muggleston said too loudly.

But when they rounded the corner at last and the square came in view—that square, Piazza Barberini, which G.I.s, returning from pass, had described as a kind of paradise, where beautiful women in fur coats mingled by the dozens, waiting for their buyers—they saw a scene of such desolation that their feet almost stopped moving.

'Great God,' Fat Stuff said, 'the whole U.S. and British armies are here.'

In vague scattered groups, some walking, some standing still passing bottles between them and keeping a close eye out for anything in a skirt that might wander along, the soldiers in the square were like restless lost figures out of a nightmare. No bright lights lit up their faces. The cafés and all the business houses were dark. Though they entered the square and stopped, Fat Stuff and Muggleston and Tex did not become part of the soldiers there. Not drunk enough yet, they looked with detachment at what was going on. Two soldiers were crumpled at the curb, puking, and another was surrounded by his buddies as he leaned against a building and shouted vague threats at the world.

'For Christ sake,' Muggleston said, 'where are all the girls?' He turned on a staff-sergeant who was drinking from a bottle. 'Guys who been down here said they was more girls than you ever saw on this street.'

The staff-sergeant finished drinking and wiped his thick lips. 'Don't ask me where they are,' he said. 'Maybe they're all home with their families—plenty of 'em live with their families.' He thought a moment. 'Maybe they're afraid to come out because of all the drunks.'

'But there ain't no curfew!' Tex, who was perhaps most

disappointed of all, broke in. 'The lights are all supposed to be on, the way *Stars and Stripes* wrote it.'

'Wasn't it any better than this earlier in the evening?' Fat Stuff asked. 'Wasn't everybody out then celebrating?'

'No,' the staff-sergeant answered. 'It's the worst night I ever seen. It's the most dismal night I ever seen in Rome.'

'It's the worst night I ever seen, too,' said Tex, and with that admission the cold world seemed to close in around them.

'Come on!' shouted Muggleston, undaunted. 'Come on, let's screw out of here and find something. Come on.'

So the three of them screwed out of there down Via Tritone, feeling better now they were moving again.

'There's something in this goddamn city and we'll find it,' Muggleston said, more sober and more ferocious.

'You'd think the celebrations would be right downtown if there was any,' Tex said. '*Stars and Stripes* said there'd be plenty of celebrations.'

'The city looks like something the army dreamed up tonight,' Fat Stuff said. 'Maybe the Red Cross made all the girls get off the street tonight so there'd be more room for us to have a good time.'

'That's why they didn't turn the lights on, too,' said Tex, inspired. 'So we wouldn't know it was Rome and maybe think we was back in the States.'

'Come on, you guys,' Muggleston shouted. 'We'll find something to drink and we'll all feel better.'

'You show us,' Tex said.

'Sure I'll show you.' And he turned abruptly and led them up a pitch-black street, walking a step or two ahead of Tex and Fat Stuff with his newly commissioned leadership.

A flashlight blinded them.

'Turn that off,' Fat Stuff hissed.

'You chaps Americans?' the Limey soldier with the flashlight asked.

'What the hell do you think we are?' Fat Stuff asked. 'Turn that off.'

The flashlight went out. The Limey was walking over to them. 'Few of our chaps have a biddy up the alley here,' the Limey said. 'You boys want a go at it? You're welcome.'

Tex and Fat Stuff didn't answer, but Muggleston said, 'Sure, where is she?'

'Come on, what d'you want to go up there for?' Fat Stuff asked. 'Come on, we'll find something on our own.'

'Come on and get some of this. We can get some more later.'

'You go on,' Fat Stuff said. 'We'll wait here.'

So they leaned against the building while Muggleston went up the alley with the Limey.

'They was about fifteen Limeys up there, all with one girl in a doorway taking cracks at her,' Muggleston said when he came back ten minutes later. 'They was all drunk and I think she was passed out cold.'

'Was she young?' asked Tex.

'I couldn't tell,' Muggleston said, excited. 'But she didn't even grunt, she just laid there. It was too dark. Look what I got!' He pulled out an unopened bottle of cognac. 'It was setting against a building so I grabbed it.'

They opened it with a knife and each took big drinks. It smashed against the bottom of their stomachs and shot out through them in fine flames, making Rome and the New Year's Eve come to life within them.

'Here's to you, you Texas son-of-a-bitch,' Muggleston said, 'even if you are from Texas!' and he took another drink and they all laughed as if it were some great eternal joke that had always been between them: the places, in far-off golden America, they had come from, and the place they were now. The different things they were in America—Texas, Indiana and New York—and the same thing, Government Issue, they had to be tonight.

And they went on up the black street more slowly, each with the cognac in him beginning to believe that after all something good might happen to them, even if the start had been lousy, even if the lights weren't on and *Stars and Stripes* was a liar and Rome was a fable—dead. Even if tomorrow was close by: the mountains, the snow, the danger, the war, the G.I. army and the G.I. law and order.

They were lost now in the black maze of Rome's backstreets, and though the wind lashed them harder they felt cozier, warmer, closer to home and closer to each other. The little triumvirate walked along with their arms around each other, aglow with the cognac, aglow with the New Year that would mean the



war's end in Italy. They passed two Welsh soldiers sitting on the curb singing a song in a brogue they couldn't understand, and that made them want to sing.

'Let's sing "When Irish Eyes Are Smilin'",' Muggleston shouted. 'Come on, all together, "When I-rish Eyes Are Smi-lin', all the world——" Come on, come on, all together.'

'Don't know it,' Tex said.

'What do you know?'

'I know "Deep in the Heart of Texas",' Tex said softly.

'All right, all together. I don't know the words but I'll string along.'

And so they went along singing, Muggleston's uncertain high voice, very loud, Fat Stuff's deep growl, and Tex's flat soft melancholy voice. It all ended up in confusion—the three of them laughing and chasing each other up the street.

They came out onto Corso Umberto, clean of civilians like the rest of the town. A weapons-carrier flew by loaded with G.I.s, one of whom shouted, 'Goin' to the rest camp?' back at them.

Was it that contact with other soldiers on their way to bed that changed their mood? Or was it the singing? They were seized with the same melancholy suddenly. It entered each of them at the same moment and each reacted differently. Tex became silent, able to walk along forever in his emptiness, without saying a word. Fat Stuff laughed, a short laugh, and said, 'I think we've had it, men'. Muggleston felt more responsible than ever for finding them something of New Year's Eve here, and said, 'By God, we'll start knocking on doors and telling these damn Guineas to spread their tables and bring out their daughters. Bunch of goddamn Fascists.'

But the bitter wind blew away his words. And the ancient city, unconquerable, aloof to all they needed of the world, drew farther and farther away.

They went past the Victor Emmanuele monument, on up to the pitted terrifying ruins of the Colosseum, back again and up the steps to Via Nazionale, through the great tunnel to Via Tritone. Once they saw a W.A.A.F. with an English lieutenant and the W.A.A.F. shouted 'Happy New Year!' to them in a crisp voice that didn't invite them over. And once two American officers with nurses passed in a command car singing 'Off we go

into the wild blue yonder'. But these things gave them nothing, only made them know more acutely that their New Year's was lost—that they'd come all these miles only to get the realization pushed more thoroughly into their brains that they were in the army, apart from personal things. They were lost. They knew their big holiday was lost and yet they kept walking.

At ten-thirty Fat Stuff said, 'What're we going to do?' and they kept on walking.

At eleven Tex said, 'We might as well find a place to sleep,' but they didn't stop.

At eleven-thirty Muggleston growled, 'I'm getting goddamn tired of this crap'. Still their legs moved.

And then they heard the music. American jazz. A great blurr of female laughter. 'Sometimes I wonder why I spend . . .' Good old 'Stardust'. They were back on Via Vittorio Veneto walking up toward the Red Cross.

All three saw at once. A door of one of the officers' rest camp hotels that lined the street was open and they could see into a mammoth ballroom all decorated and smoke-filled, with paper ribbons hanging from the ceiling and Italian girls and American officers dancing and a G.I. band, really good, really in there, playing the great American music that took the three G.I.s out here on the street four thousand miles across blue water into the warm haze that was America in their minds. All there was of America in Rome that night was this one good thing, this music that got inside the three of them and stirred their blood, and they knew this was what they wanted, just to get in there, just to be with it.

'Come on,' Muggleston said.

'Ha,' Fat Stuff said. 'I wanta see you try.'

'We can't get in there,' said Tex the corporal.

As if to emphasize his statement, a tall negro M.P. guard with a white helmet, a white braid around his arm, and a big forty-five on his hip, stepped out of the shadows. He didn't look at them or away from them, but they felt he had moved to show them he was there. He waited impassively.

Muggleston had turned pale, his eyes glistening.

'Come on,' Tex said. 'Don't try anything.'

Muggleston walked toward the door and Tex grabbed his arm.

'Don't try anything,' Tex said.

Muggleston jerked away. He went toward the door.

The M.P. towered over him.

'How 'bout us going in and listening to the music, Mac?' Muggleston said.

'Officers only in this hotel,' the M.P. said in a soft voice, sure of itself.

'We wanta listen to the music,' Muggleston said.

The M.P. looked down at him, his eyes soft, certain with authority.

'Don't start nothin', soldier.'

Muggleston moved to go by him. The M.P. grabbed his arm.

'One more move outa you, soldier,' the M.P. said, 'and you gonna have trouble.'

Tex and Fat Stuff got Muggleston by each arm and pulled him away.

'You dumb son-of-a-bitch,' Fat Stuff said.

'Let go my arms,' Muggleston said, shaking them off. 'I'll kill that nigger bastard.'

But when they let go his arms he didn't move to go back. He was quiet and sullen now, thick with anger and frustration. He moved along small and Irish and terrible, all that was wrong with the world clotted in him and needing action. Now he felt instinctively what it was he needed to celebrate his lousy New Year and his lousy twenty-eight months overseas in the infantry with. He needed fight. Blood, teeth, the soft pulp of a face under his hand. That was all he needed. Let the world have the rest, the soft stuff, the dames and dancing, the music, let them have their lousy liquor and their lousy hotels, all their lousy soft stuff.

'That nigger bastard son-of-a-bitch,' he said again, expressing everything in this small way.

The dry imminent feeling spread to the other two. They had held him back before, sensing the consequences of battering an M.P., but now the consequences seemed nothing compared to what they had out of the world. Nothing. *Niente*.

'Ha,' Fat Stuff laughed, but there was no reason for his laughter. No reason a-tall.

*Niente*.

Nothing.

Happy New Year, Rome.

F—— you, Rome.

They came round the corner into Piazza Barberini and only a scattering of G.I.s, all drunk, were left.

'Big fight here,' a little Southerner without a hat told them. 'Looka that blood on the curb. Four Limeys and a whole pack of our guys. Did you ever see so much blood? M.P.s all over the place half an hour ago.'

They saw the blood, the broken glass of bottles, the puke in the gutter, three Americans sleeping like Mexicans against the closed bar, their arms flung out from them as if broken, the wind-swept square, the city of Rome half an hour before midnight.

'Here, have a drink,' the little Southerner said.

They drank. They walked on. Fast and eager. Knowing that something had to happen. Down Via Tritone, their blood singing. Past the *Stars and Stripes* office. Past the big P.X. Their blood pounding high.

They were almost to Umberto when Muggleston happened to turn his head and see him. He grabbed Fat Stuff's arm.

'Look.'

The other two also saw him now, and all three responded to what was in Muggleston's mind. Two hundred yards behind them, on the other side of the street, came a lone white M.P., walking fast and looking scared.

'Come on,' Muggleston said between his teeth.

Through his greater need for action he had become their leader. They followed him across the street.

He went in between the columns of the arcade at Umberto and Tritone.

'Christ, it's dark in here,' Fat Stuff said.

It was dark and big and ominous in there. They stopped.

They heard the M.P.'s footsteps coming closer, walking on his rubber-soled G.I. shoes, walking fast.

'That son-of-a-bitch,' Muggleston said.

They stood behind one of the big columns and waited for him. Their blood leaped when he came around the corner and crossed the street heading for the arcade.

'Let's kill that son-of-a-bitch,' Muggleston breathed.

Their blood pounded in their ears. There was only one pulse between them, what they were going to do was the only thing left for them to do.

Now with the light still on him, just as he was coming up



on the curb, they saw the white flash of his pistol braid, the shine on his combat boots, the white helmet with the lean bony face—a hardboiled big-city face like Muggleston's—under it, innocent.

Muggleston crouched slightly and as the M.P. came by the pillar Muggleston's left came up from the pavement and crashed against his jaw and the other two came battering in on him from the rear and he crumpled without a sound, without putting up his hands, and they were all three on him, battering his face furiously, but he was gone, a piece of limp meat, their blows bruising and breaking his body.

Fat Stuff was up first. 'Get up . . . get out of here——' he whispered, grabbing Muggleston's shoulder. Muggleston had the M.P.'s head by its two ears and was banging it against the stone pavement, the flat sound magnified in the big cavern which was the arcade. Tex Gorman was sitting down beside the M.P., looking very sick and very drunk, his chin resting on his chest.

Fat Stuff dragged Muggleston up with one great heave, but Muggleston clung to the M.P.'s two ears and brought him along—then let go so that the body fell back on the pavement with a thud.

Muggleston was crying and limp with exhaustion. He sobbed in high little squeals that he couldn't stop.

Fat Stuff brought Tex to his feet, too, and with his arms around both of them led them through the arcade to Umberto.

'I think we killed him,' he whispered, breathing hard. 'Let's scram.'

That brought them all to life. They began to run, haphazardly, up the street toward the Victor Emmanuele monument. Their ears were ringing, a strange lightness was in their heads, but they were freed.

They were freed of their boredom. All of their nastiness was gone. They had mashed up Law and Order and their New Year's Eve was a big success. They had brought their violence with them on their pass, all the way to the great civilian festa city, and it had served them, it had freed them.

They slumped on a bench in the Piazza d'Italia, puffing and breathing hard, not saying a word, their very guts limp.

. . . When *Bloom!* went the first blast, and *Choom! Choom!* *Choom!* went the second, third and fourth.

'Ack-ack,' Fat Stuff said, sitting up straight. Then he laughed and turned to Muggleston, who had looked up from his bleeding hands, his face strained and old.

'It's New Year's!' Fat Stuff shouted. 'It's twelve o'clock, you guys!'

As if in answer, all the countryside around Rome opened up, all the bored men in the gun emplacements who'd been waiting hours for their moment of celebration poured lead into the sky. From way off came the little *pouff-pouffs* and from nearer the big blasts of heavy guns.

'Happy New Year, you drunken sons-of-bitches!' Fat Stuff laughed, and got off the bench. 'Come on, let's go find ourselves a room. It's New Year now. It's all over. It's 1945. Let's go!'

The other two got up slowly and went along with him.

'I need a drink,' Muggleston mumbled.

'It's a cold damn night,' Tex said.

'We'll find a bottle,' Fat Stuff said. 'And a room. Happy New Year, kamerads!'

The guns were still blasting out as they reached the top of the steps and started up Via Nazionale. Near the Canadian Club they picked up an Italian who said he could fix them with a room and *vino*. They followed along three paces behind him, their hands in their pockets.

ROBERT MELVILLE

## EDUARDO PAOLOZZI

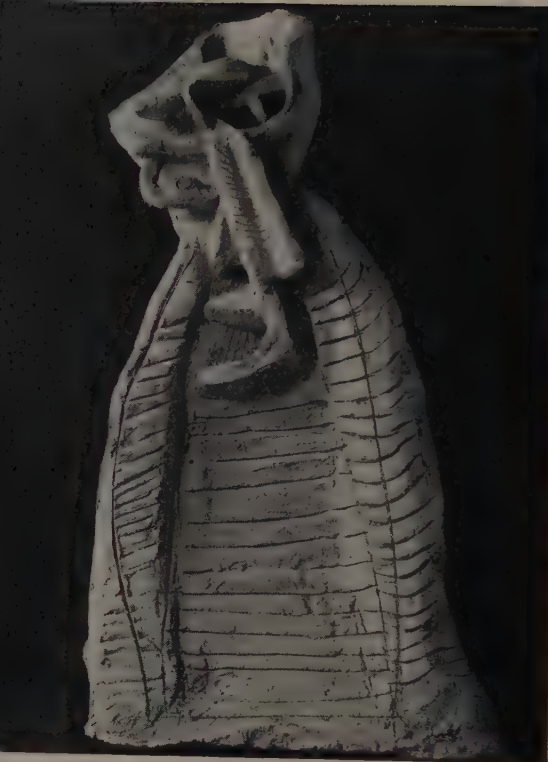
EDUARDO PAOLOZZI was born in Edinburgh, twenty-three years ago. He is the son of Italian peasants who found their way to Scotland and set up in the ice-cream business. He had his first, moderately successful one-man show of drawings and sculpture at the Mayor Gallery earlier this year, and has now gone to Paris for a stay of several months.

I am not anxious to claim too much for his present work, which is clearly little more than a series of try-outs; but I think he is exceptionally talented, and he is the most devoted and least cunning of Picasso's followers I have ever come across.

The privilege of a childhood spent in a fishing village near Edinburgh has given him fishermen, little boats, gulls, fish, ships' lanterns and oil lamps with tall glass chimneys to work upon, and—along with the heads of horses and bulls—they will probably

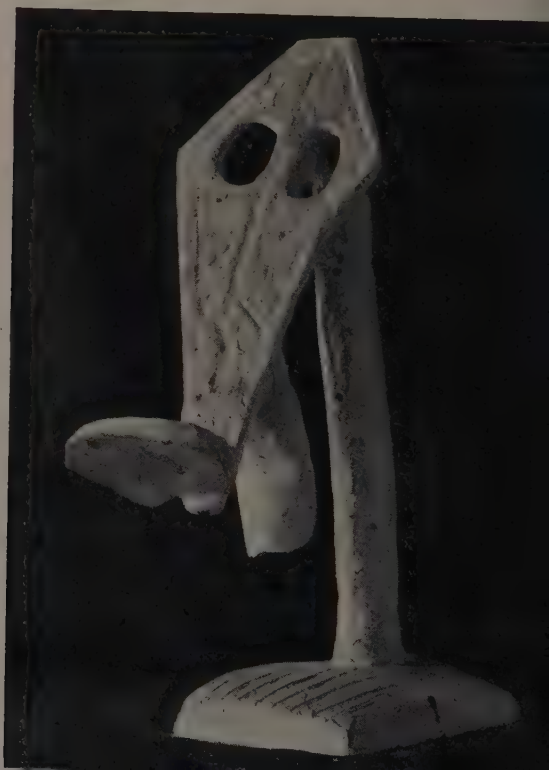


EDUARDO PAOLOZZI: Seagull and Fish. Concrete. 1946



Blue Fisherman.  
Concrete. 1946

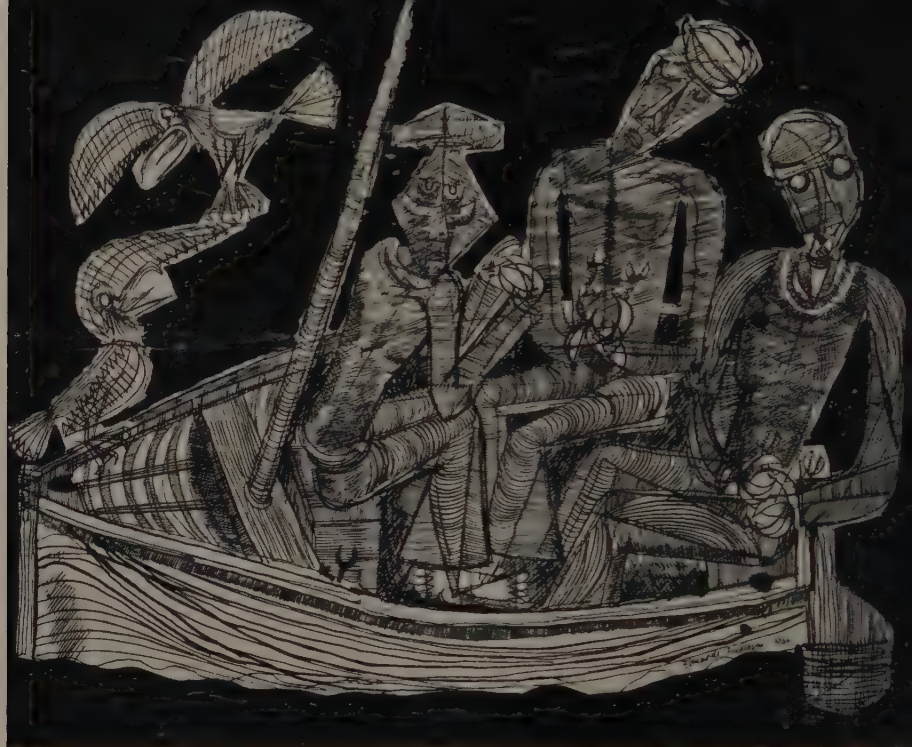
Horse's Head.  
White concrete. 1946





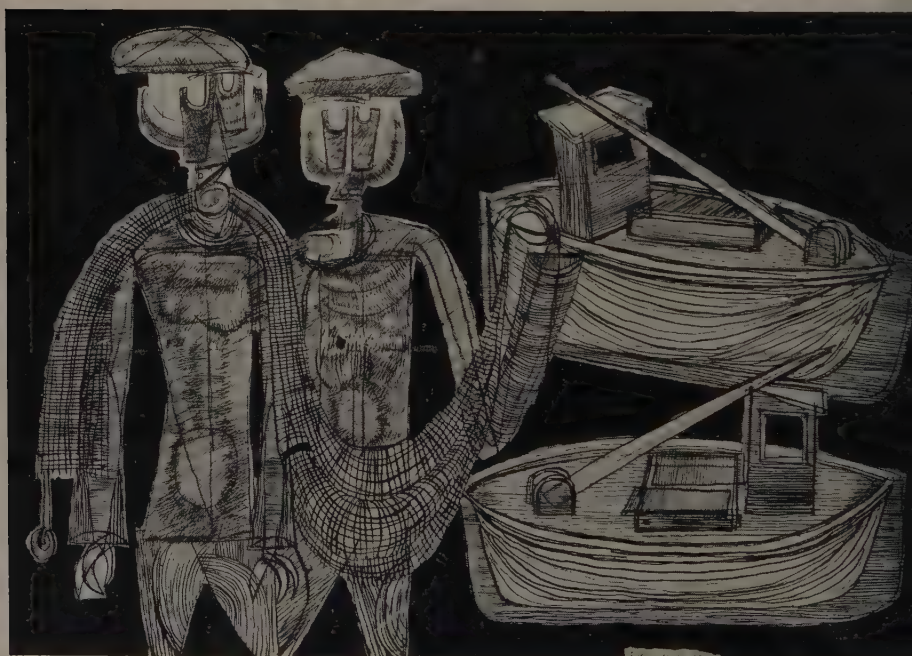


Horse's Head. Red concrete. 1946



Crab Fishermen, 1946

*Property of the Mayor Gallery*



Men and Boats, 1946

*Property of the Mayor Gallery*

last him a lifetime, for he sees them as endlessly transformable objects with an immutable fetishistic significance. He perceives one object at a time, as a self-sufficient magic presence, and I should say that his ambition is to continue and consolidate that curious period of unrealized potentiality which occurred in the art of Picasso round about 1930, and which could be called the period of the projects for monuments.

He couldn't aim much higher, and perhaps it is absurd to write in such terms about an artist who is at the very beginning of his career: all the same, I have not heard him talking of any plans, and it is his work that discloses the inordinacy of his programme. Instead of treating the art of Picasso as a vast raiding ground, he has adopted a similar mode of beholding, with the aim of inventing comparable forms of his own.

He brings a simple, untheoretical approach to the task which gives him the nerve to work out his precious lanterns and oil lamps in terms of flat-pattern cubism, and the results stand up by themselves as the first glimpses of gay yet majestic *personnages*, lively creatures who have not been with us before.

In a few of his large pen-drawings he adopts the whorls of Picasso's 1938 series and remains imitative, and these same drawings show, rather surprisingly, some influence from Colquhoun; but his best drawings are his preparatory studies for sculpture—they are not so conscientiously prepared for exhibition purposes, and indicate that he has an admirable 'writing' of his own.

His sculpture is, so far, rather crude in facture, although I have no doubt that it is the field in which his originality will find its greatest scope. Some of it is already different from anything else that I have seen. His horses heads, for instance, constructed out of a selection of their features, establish a relationship with half the animal styles of the past without a sign of conformism; I find the large empty rings for nostrils, hanging out like fabulous circular bones from a central stem, quite unforgettable, and throughout all his work in concrete, warm, active, friendly forms are coming into existence.

I do not know what kind of reception he is going to get when he returns from Paris. His work is more barbaric and at the same time more classical in its casual poise than anything the English School can show, and a long European holiday is not likely to bring him to heel.



BETTY MILLER

FRANCIS PONGE AND  
THE CREATIVE METHOD

IN the preface which he contributes to the volume on Braque in the *Trésors de la Peinture Française* series, Francis Ponge has certain statements to make about the work of that artist which throw a revealing light, not alone upon Braque ('mediator between the bourgeoisie and the revolution'), but upon the physiognomy of the writer Ponge himself: on the personality, that is to say, of a man whose achievements, in a medium other than paint, are in every sense as remarkable as those of the fellow artist of whom he writes. In respect of these, it is by no means lightly, after prolonged and critical study in fact, that a friend and contemporary, Jean-Paul Sartre, has pronounced the work of Ponge to be 'une des plus curieuses et peut-être des plus importantes de ce temps'. The introduction to Braque, then, serves us equally well as an introduction to Ponge himself: for it may well be that the peculiarity of Ponge, the secret of his technique as of his unique obsession, lies in the fact that, denied the sensory manipulation of paint, he is confined for expression to the medium of language: a medium which, through wear and tear, has become an unreliable conductor of emotion, and cannot without rehabilitation be trusted to carry in full the high potential of an original experience.

'D'où vient cette idée' (writes Ponge) 'à laquelle ne correspond encore aucun mot, qui se forme *contre* la simplicité abusive du mot qui désigne communément jusqu'alors la chose? Est-elle innée? Est-ce l'idée enfantine (Braque dit qu'on cesse de voir après 25 ans). Ou plutôt, formée par une sédimentation incessante . . . le résultat d'une lente et profonde imprégnation par laquelle il se fait que le monde extérieur et le monde intérieur sont devenus indistincts? A la faveur de quoi se produit alors la saturation, le besoin de rendre, de dégorger, le besoin de se débarrasser de l'idée, de la remplacer par un objet esthétique? . . . Il est bien sûr en tout cas, que nos objets de dilection seront alors les objets les plus proches, ceux dont nous sommes le plus sérieusement imprégnés, ceux aussi dont le mutisme jusqu'à présent nous paraît un beau



jour insupportable, et qui prétendent tout à coup, mort et fort, et toutes affaires cessantes à travers nous prendre la parole.'

It is the object, in other words, the sunflower, the jug, the apple, the loaf of bread, which presumes in each case to take the initiative. It is not the artist who seeks out his subject, but the subjects who seek him out; seek him out and tire him out, too, with the stress of their demands, with the knowledge of his own ultimate incapacity to do justice to their desires. Upon Ponge, at any rate, nothing human can exercise a like compulsion. On the contrary. 'Il nous est arrivé de constater que pour nous satisfaire ce n'était pas tant notre idée de nous-mêmes ou de l'homme que nous devions tâcher d'exprimer, mais en venir au monde extérieur, au parti pris des choses.'

*Le parti pris des choses!* The phrase has served Ponge as title for one of his own recent books. (*Collection Métamorphoses XIII*. Gallimard). And a glance at the list of contents will confirm the fact that it is certainly not with 'our idea of ourselves, or of man' that the author is in any sense concerned. The cast of this drama, the characters in order of appearance, reveal themselves one by one: 'Snails', 'Bread', 'The Butterfly', 'Rain', 'The Cigarette', 'The Piece of Meat', 'Pleasures of a Door', 'Notes for a Seashell', etc. Nor are we to suppose that what is offered to us in such a guise is a mere series of photographic stills; the tedious elaborations, say, of the literary Still Life. Still Life?—the phrase is, of course, a contradiction in terms; and nowhere, if not in the work of Francis Ponge, is the fact so effectively demonstrated to us. The only thing that is at all static about a natural object is precisely the average man's conception of it; and it is from the tyranny of that conception that the vision of Ponge liberates an underprivileged world. A vision so endowed is of its very nature inimical to the accepted structure of society; as it is to man's own conception of his function in the universe. Equally, an author who writes of sticks and stones as he might of men and women is a revolutionary whose aims exceed the limit of any known revolution, in that if he postulates a reversal of hierarchies, it is not a particular class, but humanity as a whole, that finds itself thereby reduced to the ranks. It is revolution anticipated, and with equanimity, by our own Samuel Butler. '... The division between varieties, species, genus, all gone; between instinct and reason, gone; between animals and plants, gone; between man

and the lower animals, gone. . . .’ There is, in fact, a strong affinity, other than that of a common teleology, between the outlook of Butler and that of Francis Ponge; and Butler’s conviction that there is no dividing line between organic and inorganic, that both share a common sensibility and even intelligence, finds a close echo in the work of the modern Frenchman. (Compare, for example, Butler’s conviction that stones can ‘feel’ with Ponge’s magnificent passage in *Le Galet*: or Ponge, on Water—‘Inquiétude de l’eau; sensible au moindre changement de la declivité’, with Butler’s ‘Spilt . . . water seems sometimes almost human in its uncertainty whether or no it is worth while to get ever such a little nearer to the earth’s centre by such and such a slight trickle forward’.)

In a volume entitled *L’Œillet*, *La Guêpe*, *Le Mimosa* (Mermod), Francis Ponge gives us, in the course of one of his innumerable and valuable digressions from the subject in hand, a frank account of some of the ruses and circumlocutions that, in his attempt to approach as closely as possible to the heart of his subject he is driven to employ; as well as of the difficulties that thwart at each step the enthusiasm of one involved in this unusual form of research.

‘Quelles disciplines sont nécessaires au succès de cette entreprise? . . . L’on apercevra par les exemples qui suivent quels importants déblais celà suppose (ou implique), à quels outils, à quels procédés, à quelles rubriques l’on doit ou l’on peut faire appel. Au dictionnaire, à l’encyclopédie, à l’imagination, au rêve, au télescope, au microscope, aux deux bouts de la lorgnette, aux verres de presbyte et de myope, au calembour, à la rime, à la contemplation, à l’oubli, à la volubilité, au silence, au sommeil, etc. etc. . . .’

The catalogue contains some obvious omissions. What of intuition, for example, whose claim it is to outwit, unaided, the most ingenious of mechanical devices? ‘Je ne me prétends pas poète,’ says Ponge of himself; dismissing the fact that poetry is, of all others, the most daring form of research. The denial, slightly contemptuous, can it be? comes oddly from a man so patently infected by the progressive, the malignant ardours of poetic curiosity. It is true that his poetry—he himself is constrained at times to call it as much—is no more amenable to conventional classification than is the life of the stones, snails and door-handles of which he writes. Such technique as he has is simply an avoidance

of technique, a grasping at any, even the most adventitious, verbal or quasi-scientific straw. Nor can one claim that a new form is thereby evolved, since his aim is, it seems, to avoid any form other than that presented at the moment of contemplation by the object itself. Compare in this respect his method with that of the 'straight' poetic approach: 'The Bowl of Roses', for example, by Rainer Maria Rilke, a subject that Ponge himself might well have attempted.

'Living in silence, endless opening out,  
space being used but without space being taken  
from that space which the things around diminish. . .  
where have we known the like of this?  
And this, too: that a feeling should arise  
through petals being stirred by other petals?  
And this: a something opening like an eyelid,  
and lying there beneath it countless eyelids,  
all of them closed as though they had to slumber  
ten-fold to quench some inward power of sight.'<sup>1</sup>

And here, by way of comparison, is a passage from Francis Ponge.

'Le temps des végétaux se résout à leur espace, à l'espace qu'ils occupent peu à peu, remplissant un canevas sans doute à jamais déterminée. . . . Le végétal est une analyse en acte, une dialectique originale dans l'espace. Pas de gestes, ils multiplient seulement leurs bras, leurs mains, leurs doigts—à la façon des bouddhas. . . . Les végétaux la nuit. L'exhalaison de l'acide carbonique par la fonction chlorophyllienne, comme un soupir de satisfaction qui durerait des heures, comme lorsque la plus basse corde des instruments à cordes, le plus relâchée possible, vibre à la limite de la musique, du son pur, et du silence.'

There is nothing here, it will be perceived, of the poet Rilke's self-confessed desire, through the medium of his own personality so to transform reality as to 'make the visible world invisible'; or, as he says in the concluding lines of the poem just quoted, 'to take the world . . . and change it to a handful of Within'. An intention, or rather an intervention of this sort would be utterly repugnant to Ponge; who is fascinated above all by the self-sufficiency of the material object, and whose chief care it is at no time to inflict the demands of his own personality upon that of

<sup>1</sup> Translation by J. B. Leishman.

his subject. 'C'est au mimosa lui-même—douce illusion!—qu'il faut maintenant venir: si l'on veut, au mimosa sans moi.' Unlike Rilke, he does not wish to consume the object of his desire; but to uphold in every respect the secret, the formula of its particular integrity. To achieve this, he finds it necessary, as does the psycho-analyst, to effect a preliminary disintegration of his material: with this difference: that it is the analyst and not the patient who suffers emotional imbalance, the analyst who develops the transference and who is in the end, and by the medium of his art, delivered of a specific obsession. How severe that obsession can be may be judged, for instance, by the 'poem' 'La Guêpe', in which the few hundred words it comprises are franked for publication with the stamp 'Paris août 1939—Fronville août 1943'. Four years, in this case, to be delivered from the shape which seasonally haunted and afflicted him: to reach the moment in which, as he says himself, 'l'indifférence est atteinte'. (And how like that of the wasp is his own method of attack in these pages; repetitively alighting, receding, returning from all angles to settle once again, to probe and to penetrate with fierce waspish passion the subject of his desire.)

'Elle semble vivre dans un état de crise continue qui la rend dangereuse. Une sorte de frénésie ou de forcènerie—qui la rend aussi brillante, bourdonnante, musicale, qu'une corde fort tendue, fort vibrante et dès lors brûlante ou piquante, ce qui rend son contact dangereux. . . . Grésillante comme une friture; une chimie effervescente; un contact électrique; une vibration venimeuse. . . .'

Occasionally, he is defeated. With the mimosa, for instance, which he tells us was one of his earliest emotional predilections, he is ready to confess his own failure. 'Oh, qu'il est difficile d'approcher de la caractéristique des choses!' Here the attempt breaks down: the mysterious reproductive system of the artist aborts and the result is artistic miscarriage. But such failures are, in fact, few and far between; and wherever he does succeed, his success is startling; bringing the reader within range of an experience without equal in literature and rare indeed in the field of painting. It is to this that Sartre refers when he states categorically that no living writer has ever come so close to apprehending the being of things.

The attempt to see the 'mimosa sans moi' is, of course, doomed to failure. Ponge is aware of this. At the same time, he is no



Berkleyan; and if his own access to the plant is a necessary condition of the transaction between them, it is precisely, as we have said, the independent existence of the plant that gives it value in his eyes. And infinite are the precautions he takes in order not to damage that independence; to deflower it by a forced interpretation, for instance, or to subject it to the inglorious technicolour of the pathetic fallacy. So marked is this diffidence, that instead of controlling his subject, Ponge has the impression that it is the subject, on the contrary, which exerts a growing influence over him, even to the extent, at last, of an actual exchange of substance. 'Ayant entrepris d'écrire une description de la pierre, il s'empêtra.' As in the fairy tale, the power of words alone is sufficient—*abracadabra!*—to turn the princess into a toad. This passivity is, of course, illusory. The artist is not simply a medium: within the limits of his own personality, he is also a forcing-house. 'Par les yeux grands ouverts j'absorbais tout comme une éponge absorbe le liquide,' wrote Matisse. The eye of Ponge is endowed with the same natural avidity: his, too, is the indecorous eye of the artist whose *voyeurism* pierces the drapery of habit, the fig-leaf of conventional form; the naked eye whose vision surpasses in range the most subtly pitched of scientific devices. In view of this, it may seem strange that so often, instead of working out the sum for himself, Ponge feels impelled to look up the scientific answer at the back of the book. Technically, no doubt, the result is correct and warrants a mark; but the accompanying result is a certain frustration: we are led, not to a vantage point, but to a blind alley. Desirable as it may be to approach a given subject from more than one angle, the point of view, the *parti pris* of science, is too often not an ally but an enemy of individual vision. Thus, if the formula of research which Ponge has outlined to us (and including as it does the use of the microscopic lens) were developed to its logical conclusion, the mimosa might, without incongruity, find itself subjected to the scrutiny, to the technique of the Cavendish Laboratory; and reduced thereby to its component neutrons and electrons would paradoxically lose the very form that had attracted Ponge to it in the first place. Far from breaking down the substance of the mimosa, therefore, it will be seen that it is in his own interest to build it up: to aid it, with his eye, to sustain the peculiarity of its form: just as it is in the interest of a victorious nation to maintain, albeit at its own expense, the internal economy of a

country whose independent life it has previously been at pains to overthrow.

In that section of his work, entitled 'Of the Nature and Origin of the Mind', the philosopher Spinoza is able to distinguish two forms of knowledge, and, deriving from these, a third, which, he says, we will call intuition. 'This kind of knowledge proceeds from an adequate idea of the absolute essence of certain attributes of God, to the adequate knowledge of the essence of things.' This fascinating, this incalculable ascent in the scale of knowledge, is a process which is fully exposed to us in the structure of Ponge's work; so closely, in these fluctuating paragraphs, are we permitted to follow the searchings, the hesitations, the sudden triumphant affirmations of the creative spirit in action. As in growth itself, the impulse of creation quickens from cell to cell, so that it is with an organic logic closely akin to that of the flower or plant that he is dealing with, that the subject develops before our eyes the pattern of an individual form. We get a vivid example of this process in *L'Œillet*, in which the sentences describing the hidden winding root of the carnation become as lengthy, searching and tenacious as the root-fibre itself; in which paragraph after paragraph seems to grope, as does the spreading root, for the conditions most favourable to the realization of its flower. 'I will illustrate all three kinds of knowledge', says Spinoza, 'by a single example. Three numbers are given for finding a fourth. . . . We infer the fourth number from an intuitive grasping of the ratio which the first bears to the second.' (See, too, Abt Vogler's 'Out of three sounds . . . not a fourth, but a star'.) This intuition of the philosopher's, this inmost pulse of the human mind, is a quality no scientific instrument can measure or supplant. In modern terms, the nearest equivalent is perhaps the G. of our latter-day psychologists: the education of correlates, for instance, of Spearman. And in the leap of the mind which this postulates, is there not a mysterious parallel with the leap of growth itself; with that organic intuition, that progressive education of correlates which, by 'an intuitive grasping of the ratio which the first bears to the second' enables the plant blindly, yet infallibly, to elaborate its own protoplasm, to hoist itself above the earth, to split the scales of its bud, and to produce at last in all its perfection the carnation or the mimosa which, triumphantly re-grafted, continues with undiminished vivacity to bloom for us in the prose of Francis Ponge?

## SELECTED NOTICE

*Essay on Rime.* Karl Shapiro. Secker & Warburg Ltd. 6s. 64 pages.

There has been, to my knowledge, no general critical estimate by any of our poets covering the startling vicissitudes of poetry in the twentieth century. Karl Shapiro has attempted to make such an historical survey in rime, an ambitious task, even for an essay which is 'intended in no sense to be definitive'. The framework of his essay is lucid enough: it divides itself into three sections, each diagnosing a confusion in modern rime: in Prosody, in Language and in Belief. Under these headings the author discusses quite thoroughly all of the most important trends and pitfalls in the poetry of our time. The essay was written while the poet was on duty in the Pacific, without access to books. Hence, not only the scope and the intention of the work are admirable, but the conditions under which it was written command one's respect. But one cannot say unreservedly with the *New York Times* review quoted on the dust jacket, that Shapiro has written 'a chapter of cultural and moral history', as well as 'a poem'. Both as a poem, and as a 'detailed assessment of the art of poetry in our time', this essay in rime is unsuccessful. Poetically, its language and technique are not good; and as an assessment it makes too many bald mistakes, questionable generalizations, and false conclusions, to be really valuable or original. Shapiro has applied his telescope to modern poetry, but the focus is blurred and the conclusions are frequently astigmatic.

We have the author's word that 'The metric of this book is made upon / The classic English decasyllable / Adapted to the cadence of prose speech; / Ten units to the verse by count of eye / Is the ground rhythm, over which is set / The rough flux and reflux of conversation'. It soon becomes apparent that there has been no successful organic fusion of the pentameter line and conversational rhythm. The essay splits, either dashing itself upon the rocks of unsyncopated and monotonous five-beat iambic; or else becoming very prosy indeed, and losing all poetic cadence. I venture the hypothesis that the 'classic English decasyllable' is not adaptable to the cadences of our speech. Certainly Eliot, the unquestionable modern master in the use of prose cadences, makes no such use of the pentameter line. It is true that the Elizabethan dramatists were able to use it with variations, but speech has changed considerably since Shakespeare and Webster, and the use of that metre today has proved stilted and unsatisfactory for the purpose of approaching the rhythms of our unrheterical speech. It is indicative of Shapiro's essential lack of clarity in technique that he would make an attempt as technically unsophisticated as this, and hope to bring it off.

The question then arises as to why he should wish to write an essay on modern poetry in verse rather than in prose. Lucretius, Horace and Pope are cited as examples of poets who have used poetry successfully for didactic ends. But the brilliant, slithering pentameter couplets of Pope are a highly successful artifice, pointed by wit, whereas Shapiro's loose technique and doughy language do not augur well by comparison. Shapiro says that 'poets prefer to roost / In arbors rather than the tree of knowledge'; and further asserts that 'dialectic is the foe of poetry' (a shaky generalization, since Dylan Thomas has proved how successful a dialectically creative process can be in poetry).

It is his belief that criticism has 'charted poetry into dangerous narrows / And dashed its own brains out upon the rocks / Of absolute meaning'. His intention is to write this essay 'In protest to the semantic muse', and to use 'language emotionally', to 'infuse / Criticism with pleasure, sense with clarity'. I find no pleasure in the rhythms of the essay. Nor do I find delight when Shapiro refers to the 'squawking chicken of semantics', an ugly, humourless image, and representative of many similar ones in the volume.

Regarding the use of language emotionally, it is a high cause for disrespect to find so many abstractions and clichés in a verse essay which is 'against the semantic muse', and which seeks to make more sense and clarity than critics have done by the use of prose which, though it may be semantically conscious (as any serious artist in words is today) is considerably less painful and corny than (I quote five out of numerous instances): 'To science belongs / The isolation of knowledge, to art belongs / The isolation of beauty.' (The statement is a bromide, and even if it weren't, *beauty* is a meaningless abstraction here.) 'What deadly distillate of the heart is this / That kills the man most dearly pledged to live?' (This apropos of Hart Crane; submitted anonymously to fifty intelligent readers, I am sure they would concur that it was bad Edna St. Vincent Millay.) 'And we who have no heart to walk with beauty. . . .' (Worse than Millay; again the cliché abstraction of *beauty*.) 'What witch pinched Robert Browning?' (No comment.) 'What grief / Beat at the golden doors of Hopkins' heart?' (Compare actual Millay: 'Once the ivory box is broken / Beats the golden bird no more.' If she is more guilty, it is only because of the inversion.)

Again and again one finds uninspired images, pseudo-poetic and pseudo-serious rhetoric. I fail to see how a poet who makes such consistently sloppy use of language (doubly unforgivable in a poem) has any valid right to attack semantics as often as Shapiro does in the course of his poem. Or perhaps it is because he would *rather* use language like that, and throwing semantics out of the window gives his poetic conscience free reign to do so?

The first section of the essay, on Prosody, is garbled and full of many undigested statements and downright errors. We are told that the measure of English verse can take only two forms: 'count of eye' (by which he means metrical stress), and 'count of ear' (by which he means sprung rhythm and heaven knows what else). I have never counted metrical stress by count of eye, and would not know how to do it. It seems rather obvious that metrical stress is a count of ear also, the *underlying* beat-pattern discernible in metrical poetry. In the case of sprung rhythm the 'count of ear' is determined not by a regular underlying beat, but by the stress of words according to the accent given them by an inflected prose reading. This 'prose stress' was often arbitrary in Hopkins, and so marked. Hopkins has given us a lucid account of metrics and sprung rhythm in his essay which is published as a foreword to his poetry, and which brilliantly defends his own technique. Hopkins further discusses counterpoint, defining it as the opposition of metrical stress and prose stress within metrical poetry, for metrical poetry also has its prose stress, riding over the underlying beat, often opposing it and creating syncopation (counterpoint). Highly counterpointed metrical poetry (John Donne, Yeats's later work) gives a gnarled effect which the sophisticated modern ear can appreciate, attuned as it



is to the clashings and counterpoints of modern life. Hence, the interest in Donne's anachronistic rhythms is that they correspond to our own. This highly condensed explanation is offered to clarify Shapiro's confused knowledge of metrics, and his ignorance of counterpoint. There are repeated vague generalizations, appeals to Sidney Lanier (the high-school teacher's favourite) and to Bridges (who never understood Hopkins's rhythms), with resulting erroneous statements about the poetry of Shakespeare, Milton and others.

We are told that the urge in modern verse is toward the primitive ('Long loud beats repeat like tom-toms'), when it seems quite apparent that the good modern poets are extremely skilful and sophisticated in their use of counterpointed metrics and sprung rhythm. We are given an analysis of Imagist prosody which is weak, and which takes no account of the qualitative aims in language of the Imagists, nor the reason for their failure. Again and again, Shapiro hints at a 'new form' which might have to do with prose metric (whatever that may be) in rime. What he really is trying to talk about is counterpoint, but since he does not understand it, the argument is confused. He states confidently that 'Hopkins's influence . . . is actually small, in metric as in belief', yet it is quite visibly true that Hopkins has had a tremendous influence on a number of poets, Dylan Thomas being the chief example that comes to mind.

Shapiro believes that Whitman was the father of a new form, and Joyce the founder of a 'new rhythmical idiom'; that Cummings is a 'cubist in language' (!); and that it is quite possibly morally dangerous to let men like Cummings make a tinker toy of the English language. This shockingly conservative statement is first balanced by a vague tribute to Cummings, but his enrichment of the English language by syntactical and punctuational anarchy does not really meet with the poet's approval.

Bridges is given considerably more space than the genius of Hopkins; Eliot's *Four Quartets* are called 'his most depressing prosody' (!); and the fault is finally laid with a dull plop to the 'extant violent changes of our speech'. From this whole muddled section on prosody, Shapiro's careful conservatism manages to emerge clearly enough, sandwiched neatly between the numerous errors and wild generalizations. If there is a confusion in prosody, the confusion seems to rest at least as much upon Shapiro as upon his age.

The second section concerns itself with the confusion in language. Here again, the conservative attack is veiled. Concern is expressed over the poets who have used every new medium of linguistic expression. A need is asserted for the revivification of the 'personal idiom' rather than the swelling of the 'special idiom' of our time. Shapiro is opposed to the 'broad use of the raw untreated data / Of science and of whole experience'. 'The great survive the idiom of their time.' That may be true, but they also use it: Shakespeare used the Elizabethan idiom, John Donne used his compasses, Auden uses the 'muscle-bound marines'. I do not agree that the poets are losing their personality by diving into the pool of contemporary discoveries in science or what have you. They cannot wait until this raw, untreated water is chlorinated. Poets have always dared to use the raw experience of their time, and they will have to trust to luck that this experience or data is valid for the future generations, just as Donne was lucky because compasses are still used today. (I am indebted to

C. Day Lewis's volume, *The Poetic Image*, for a very lucid discussion of this point in question.) It may be true that a good deal of modern verse will fall by the wayside; but many contemporaries of Keats and Shelley fell by the wayside too. Abandoning the 'untreated' data of science and experience in our time will not help the personal idiom of our poets, and may certainly hinder it, by limiting their use of the living language to sources of metaphor and rhetoric which are already dead or suffocating.

Shapiro finds the 'style' of our modern writers too multiple for his ease. He says that an album of Picasso 'shocks by variety' and refers to Auden's versatility, though admitting Auden's 'convincing artistry'. We are told that 'style is the man', and that we have come to a 'schizophrenic end'. But are we witnessing the breakdown of the unity of artistic personality under the vast dissociations of modern life? Picasso in painting, Eliot and Auden in poetry, have consistently demonstrated the ability of the artist to maintain a strong personal core while allowing the accumulated past and the overwhelming present to filter through them, collecting as precipitate what they find most valuable. If some of the lesser artists break under the strain, it does not necessarily reflect upon the weaknesses of their personalities as upon the difficulty of being an artist today, and of grappling with the 'raw, untreated' realities.

Symptomatic of the failure of language, Shapiro finds we are 'English-shy', and attributes it to the conditions under which rime has laboured: 'Bad education, / The primacy of the journalese, the part / The pseudo-semantic sciences have played, / The atomization of time-honoured forms, / The nervousness of genius in our era, / The rapid pulse of the morphology / Of English in our day—'. The list is sound enough, with the exception of making the semantic sciences a cause and not a result. But in bewailing the failure of language, how can we bewail the solution of the poets who have created new and wonderful uses of the language? On the whole, they have been more successful than unsuccessful in dealing with their etymological problems. It is not *they* who have failed the language; nor have they avoided simplicity deliberately. Yet Shapiro says that to go through more and more analysis in art or science is to embroider the confusion: 'toward language we must show the piety / Of simple craftsmen for their wood'. I would say 'yes' if I knew how it were to be done; but I do not know, and judging from the 'golden doors of Hopkins' heart' I do not think Shapiro knows, or he would not misconstrue piety with corn. We have no guarantee that things are going to get less complex; and to say at this time that what we need is a return to simplicity is a fatuous statement. Kafka says there is a point to be reached, beyond which there is no turning back. Shapiro has reached that point and has turned back; but not being a genuine naïf, he is now in a first-class quagmire of sentimentality and cliché.

The third section of the essay deals with the confusion in belief. Hart Crane's suicide is labelled a baffling act, and then we are given Shapiro's solution that Crane died for modern rime, a wasted death. He offers this suicide as a warning to all who continue on the danger path, and even suggests a salvage crew to bring up Crane's body as a lesson for all of us. Surely the example of Crane is by now a banal and romanticized rag to hang in the wind. To make it a symbol of the failure of art is to beg the question by arguing from the particular to the

general. Fear of failure will not necessarily turn the poets back to graze in well-worn Georgian pastures, nor would such grazing yield anything further than the cliché.

Shapiro states that it is not the failure in belief (religious and otherwise) that disturbs our rime, but our anxiety and desperation over this failure, and our mad rush to find a new faith. In the modern quest for values, he wonders what has happened to the literature 'Of nature, where the love poem and the plain / Statement of feeling?' It seems obvious that the lack of direct statement, the absence of the Georgian attitude, is all part and parcel of the failure of language, which has brought about the modern distrust of rhetoric; not to mention all the complexities which have brought about the inability to feel simply. The poet records what is true for him, and he knows that whether he likes it or no, unless he is a complete naïf, he cannot be a Georgian poet today: let Shapiro lay the blame to psycho-analysis, semantics or science, the damage has been done and there is no turning back.

The essay ends by posing the dilemma of the modern poet staring in the glass at dawn and seeing 'The image of his sufficiency, a face / Wretched in weakness and a vibrant claw / Trailing a pen'. From such ennui he writes poems of nothing, about nothing. We have reached Wasteland Number Two, Shapiro stirs in his seat and murmurs, 'This is where I came in'.

In the Note and Acknowledgement to his essay, Shapiro says he hopes 'That for the man who shares these sentiments / It will express the argument against / The common style, and help solidify / The layman's confidence in a *plainer art*'. (*Italics mine.*) We know how Shapiro himself has answered his call to a plainer art by his own recent poetry. Shapiro is now a believer in simplicity and direct statement of feeling ('When I read Horace all night long / Tell me, Conscience, was I wrong?'). His poetic results have not been such as to warrant other poets following the same path. The really fine poets have not been guilty of vulgar or sentimental statement of their feelings. Their concern has still been with the *logos*, a painful concern always.

As for *belief*, the problem still remains, since poets are always prone to belief. I agree with Shapiro that Marxism and Freudism are no substitutes for Christianity, since they have proved by now to lack a *Weltanschauung*. (Freud himself made no such claims for psycho-analysis, as Shapiro rightly points out.) That leaves nothing but the problem, and how it is to be solved I do not know. But the poets will wrestle with it, and the intelligent ones, let us hope, though they may go back to God, as Shapiro and others have done, will not fall into the trap of the *Return to Simplicity*, the new poet-of-the-month-club movement. For those of us who are *not* anti-intellectual, and who believe in the image of the poet's sufficiency which Shapiro finds so melodramatically crumbling, the forward path of the poet into the maze is not a cause of such terrifying concern as to sound the retreat: the good poets, like Theseus, will always have a ball of string and a sword handy.

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